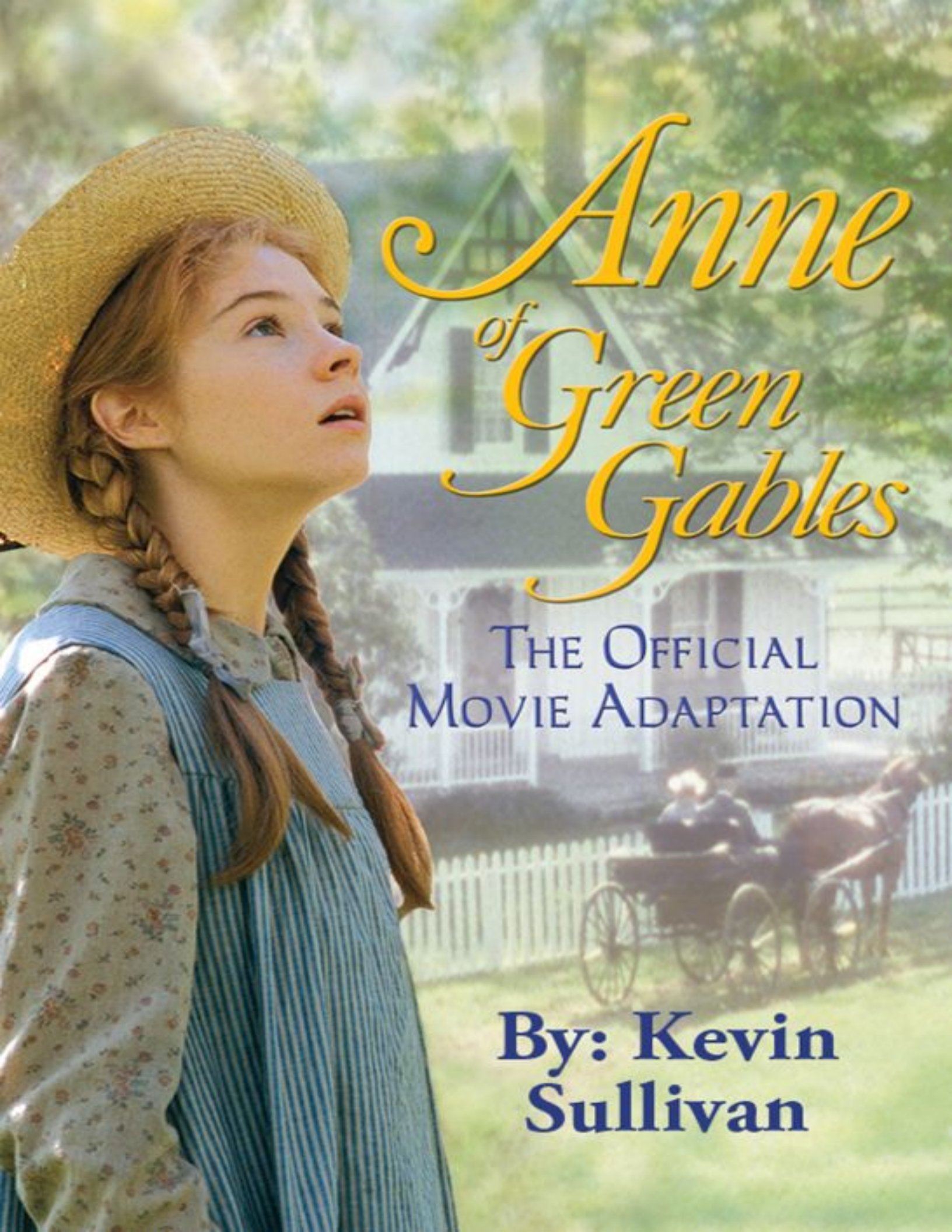
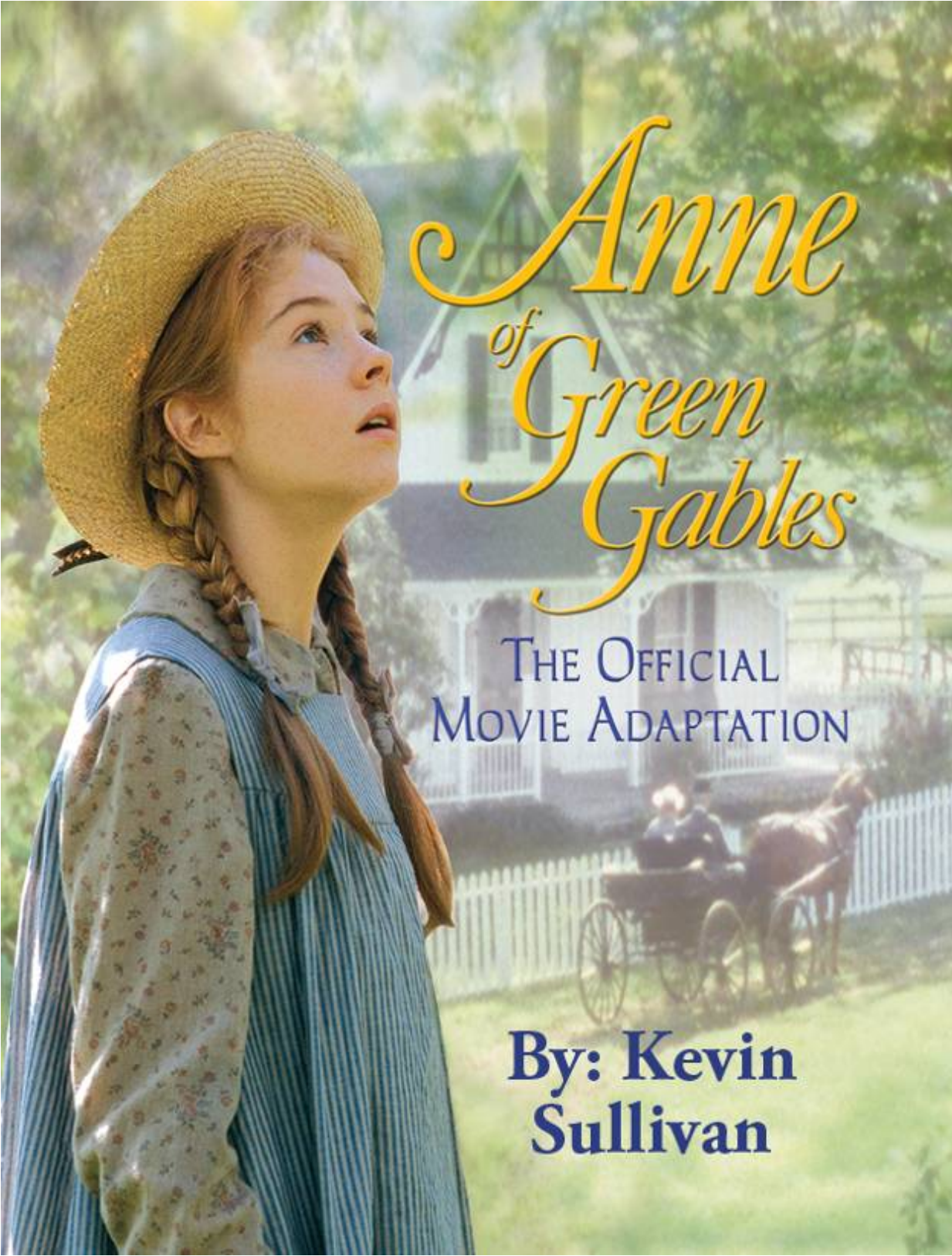


The background of the cover is a soft-focus photograph of a young woman with red hair in two long braids, wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and blue overalls over a floral blouse. She is looking upwards and to the right. In the background, a white house with a porch and a white picket fence are visible. A horse-drawn carriage with two people is also in the distance. The title 'Anne of Green Gables' is written in a large, elegant, yellow script font. Below it, the text 'THE OFFICIAL MOVIE ADAPTATION' is in a smaller, blue, serif font. At the bottom right, the author's name 'By: Kevin Sullivan' is in a bold, blue, serif font.

Anne of Green Gables

THE OFFICIAL
MOVIE ADAPTATION

**By: Kevin
Sullivan**

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Anne of Green Gables

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MOVIE ADAPTATION

By: Kevin
Sullivan

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

The official Movie Adaptation

By: Kevin Sullivan

SMASHWORDS EDITION

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*"Kindred spirits are not so scarce as I used to think.
It's splendid to find out there are so many of them in the world"*

- *Anne Shirley*



*"There she weaves by night and day, a magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say, a curse is on her if she stay to look down to
Camelot"*

ANNE read the lines deliriously. The words floated like a delicious froth on the breeze that blew through the dark piney woods.

“Willows whiten, aspens quiver

Little breezes dusk and shiver. . .”

Lord Tennyson’s poem “The Lady of Shallott” was her beloved escape from the grim reality of working for a backwoods family who knew little about refined things like poetry and romance. This particular book was very special. It had belonged to her dear mother, who had departed this world leaving Anne an orphan who had found her way into the hands of people who couldn’t have cared less about her.

It was a bright November morning in Marysville, New Brunswick, as Anne struggled up the hill. The full pail of milk banged against her side as she walked. Miss Anne Shirley heard her name being bellowed from the porch

of the Hammond homestead. She was carrying a basket of eggs and milk and other groceries from the local market to feed the eight Hammond children. She ignored Mrs. Hammond's repeated hollering because she had lost herself in the beautiful words, and had been transported to a long-ago time, peopled with noble knights and damsels in distress.

“There she weaves by night and day

A magic web with colours gay.

She has heard a whisper say,

A curse is on her if she stay

To look down to Camelot. . .”

In Anne's imagination, she was no longer a skinny, red-haired orphan, but a beautiful and mysterious great Lady, locked in a tower weaving a magical tapestry. Anne willed herself to be kept in thrall to that magical realm, but when an exasperated shriek shattered her dream, she realized that Mrs. Hammond could actually see her standing in the fir grove.

“Anne! Anne Shirley! What in heaven's name are you doing standing there talking to yourself. Get in here this minute! This minute I tell you— before I whip you with a birch switch. These twins need changin'. You're late with the vittles! And Mr. Hammond's been waitin' well nigh an hour for you to bring him his lunch!”

The Lady of Shallot evaporated into thin air. Plain, skinny, thirteen-year-old Anne Shirley came to her senses immediately. Mrs. Hammond could be a nag, and her temper knew no bounds. Anne, now startled like a deer, had been caught daydreaming—she was in for it now!

Anne arrived back at the cabin at break-neck speed, but Mrs. Hammond had worked herself into a fury. Dumping one of her damp babies into Anne's arms, she seized the precious book of poetry and flung it inside the pot-bellied stove.



"I simply couldn't live here if I didn't have any imagination"

"That'll teach you to remember you're here to look after my babies, instead of porin' over them fool books o' yours," she snapped.

"I do enjoy babies in moderation, Mrs. Hammond," replied Anne, fighting back tears at seeing her mother's most precious possession go up in flames. "But twins three times in succession is too much. Besides," she added, throwing caution to the wind, "I simply couldn't live here if I didn't have any imagination."

Mrs. Hammond's eyes narrowed.

"I'll take none o' your cheek, Anne Shirley. One more word and you'll be out on your backside and back to the orphanage. Now get these babies changed before you take Mr. Hammond his lunch. And be quick about it or he'll give you a whippin' you won't forget."

Anne dutifully went about her task. Mr. Hammond and his workers could be rough on a girl too—especially when they were hungry.

Anne truly meant to hurry as quickly as she could with Mr. Hammond's lunch, but she just couldn't help noticing the lovely bluebells along the road and the light twinkling on the river. Then too there were heaps of buttercups in the open field. Anne flung herself across the pasture imagining she was flying like a meadowlark. It was as thrilling as poetry. It was her way of keeping from thinking about the mournful Lady of Shalott who was so tragic. "I just love poetry that gives you that crinkly feeling up and down your back," she confided to a noble looking, crimson jack-in-the pulpit flower.

As soon as she reached the Hammond sawmill, all thoughts of Knights and Camelot were driven from Anne's mind again. Anne watched aghast as she witnessed Mr. Hammond collapse to the ground amid all of his workers.



He had suffered a heart attack. It seems that in a fit of anger, he had pushed one of his men, intending to strike him. His own heart had struck the first blow. There he lay, stretched out and still, the ultimate victim of his own legendary rage. Anne was terrified that she alone had caused the calamity by being tardy yet again.

Late that night, after Anne had gently tucked the sundry and grieving Hammond children into bed, she spoke to her reflection in a dirty mirror hanging on the cabin wall. "Katie," she whispered, "If only I hadn't lost myself in the beauty of the day, the one beauty that is vouchsafed me, perhaps Mr. Hammond might still be with us." However Katie, her imaginary friend, only stared at her silently.

The distress resulting from Mr. Hammond's death seemed to blanket the whole house in silence. The only sounds were an occasional sob from the distraught Mrs. Hammond, and the murmuring of her cousin, Essie, who had come to help with the burial arrangements. Tiptoeing downstairs, Anne was halted in mid-step by a devastating comment from the intolerant Essie.

"That home girl," she said, and though her voice was soft, it cut Anne like a razor, "she'll have to go back where she came from Matilda."

Anne crept down the remaining stairs and tried to make her presence felt in the kitchen. Mrs. Hammond sat at the table, staring blankly into space.

Essie stood behind her, soothing her.

"Mrs. Hammond," faltered Anne. "Mrs. Hammond, I blame myself entirely for poor Mr. Hammond's death. To have to wait an extra hour for lunch is a terrible burden to place on any man. I shall never overcome my grief. But please, please don't send me back to the orphanage. I beg of you Mrs. Hammond it would be a fate worse than death itself"

Mrs. Hammond's gaze went right through Anne.

"Orphan children are all the same," declared Essie, to no one in particular, "Aye, they're trash Essie. That's what they are." Mrs. Hammond nodded. Her eyes were cold and empty, but she eventually caught Anne in her gaze. "Trash," she repeated again dully, "Poor miserable trash that don't 'serve much better. I was daft when I took you in Anne Shirley. I'd be daft to keep you now!"



"If only I hadn't lost myself in the beauty of the day, the one beauty which is vouchsafed me, perhaps Mr. Hammond might still be with us"

Anne backed out of the dimly lit room, quietly closing the door behind her. She stood in the shadows of the hall, frightened at the miserable prospect of returning to life in an institution, a place she escaped from long ago.

.....

It was the end of another long, uneventful day at the Fairview Orphanage in Hopeton. Amidst the flurry of bedtime arrangements no one noticed a still figure pressed against the windowpane. Six months had passed since Mrs. Hammond had left a weeping Anne in the care of the county orphanage director, Mrs. Cadbury. During those grim six months, the only comfort the lonely child could find had lain in her imaginary world. "Katie," she whispered now, "I'm truly glad we have each other. It's so difficult finding a kindred spirit these days."

As she spoke, a looming figure walked from the shadows of a gable in the darkened dormitory. Mrs. Cadbury chided Anne gently. "Anne Shirley, get

into bed. I might have known I'd find you gazing at the moon instead of asleep like everyone else."

"I do apologize, Mrs. Cadbury," whispered Anne. "I don't mean to be difficult, truly I don't. It's just that my life is a perfect graveyard of buried hopes."

"Well then, perhaps my news may resurrect some of them," quipped Mrs. Cadbury, with a trace of a smile. "I've had a request for two of our girls to live with families in Prince Edward Island. And I've decided that you shall be one of them."

Anne's eyes glowed with a desperate hope. "A family? Oh thank you, Mrs. Cadbury, thank you with all my heart."

Mrs. Cadbury touched the child's cheek, "Perhaps these people can help shatter this dream world you live in."

.....

Mrs. Rachel Lynde lived just where the Avonlea main road dipped down into a little hollow. It was a perfect setting for someone who was known throughout the length and breadth of Avonlea for her astounding ability to manage other peoples' affairs almost as well as her own. One afternoon in early June, she was sitting in her usual position on the front porch, when her sharp eye spotted something that almost made her drop her embroidery-work. "It couldn't be!" she exclaimed to herself. "Why, yes it was. It was Matthew Cuthbert driving that horse and buggy...and dressed in his best suit, that's what! Now where would a man like that be going on a day when he should be paying full attention to tending to chores? she mumbled, positively beside herself.

Rachel called to her husband Thomas, weeding the garden. "I declare, I'm more than puzzled." She stood up to get a better look. "Humph! Matthew Cuthbert's not going fast enough for the doctor. And he can't be going for turnip seed in a suit" Thomas shrugged and murmured under his breath, "Maybe he's goin' courtin'." "Well that does it," exclaimed Mrs. Rachel. "My afternoon is ruined. I won't have a moment's peace until I know what that man is up to. Marilla Cuthbert is simply going to have to explain all this!"

Pausing only to skewer a long hat-pin into her wide straw hat, she waddled down the veranda stairs and set out on foot for Green Gables; the rambling,

green and white house, where spinster Marilla Cuthbert lived with her bachelor brother, Matthew.



"My afternoon is ruined. I won't have a moment's peace until I know what that man's up to"

As Mrs. Rachel stepped into Marilla's spotless kitchen, she noticed a table laid out for three. "Marilla must be expecting someone home with Matthew to tea," she mused, dizzy with puzzlement.

"I was kind of worried about you, Marilla, when I saw your brother drive by just now. In his suit."

Marilla looked like a woman of narrow experience and rigid conscience, which she was. However there was a saving something about her mouth that, if it had been developed, might have hinted at a sense of humour. This afternoon her stern face held no clue as to the mystery though. Her whole attention seemed concentrated on the silver she was cleaning.

"I'm fine. Just fine, thank you, Rachel," she answered calmly, "and how are all the Lyndes?" "Oh we're all right as rain Marilla," Mrs. Rachel tapped her toes. Her elbows jerked with impatience. "Matthew never goes to town this time of year, Marilla." Marilla's tone gave nothing away. "Matthew wasn't going to town," she said evenly.

"Oh. . . Don't keep me in such suspense, for Heaven's sake!" implored Mrs. Rachel.

The tight lines around Marilla's mouth gave into a smile. "He was going to Bright River," she replied. "We're getting a little boy from the orphanage at Hopeton. Matthew's gone to fetch him from the station."

If Marilla had said that Matthew had gone to Bright River to meet a herd of elephants from Africa, Mrs. Rachel could not have been more astonished. She was dumbstruck for a full five seconds. "Why Marilla Cuthbert!" she exclaimed, when she finally found her voice again, "A boy! Why you don't know the first thing about raising children! Whatever put such an idea into your head?"

Well, Matthew's getting along in years. He's not as spry as he once was. And his heart bothers him a great deal. Mrs. Spencer was up here a couple of months ago and she said she was getting a girl from Hopeton Asylum in the spring. Matthew and I gave it a good deal of thought and in the end we decided to send word by Mrs. Spencer's niece, Roberta, to tell her to bring us a boy while she was at it."



It was unavoidably clear to Mrs. Rachel that all this planning had taken place without benefit of her advice. Yet Marilla was calmly making tea and talking as if boys were fetched from asylums every day of the week!

"We told her to fix us up with a little boy of eleven or twelve," she continued on. "Old enough to do the chores, but young enough to be brought up proper."

It was just simply too much for Mrs. Rachel. "Now look here," she erupted. "You know I pride myself on always speaking my mind." Marilla rolled her eyes and braced herself for the coming torrent of words. "I'll just tell you plain that I think you're doing a mighty ridiculous thing. If you had asked my advice in the matter—which sadly you didn't do, Marilla, I would have told you straight out that what you're planning is altogether risky, that's

what. Why just last week I read in the paper how a couple took a boy out of an orphan asylum and he set fire to their house at night. On purpose! Burnt them to a crisp in their beds!”

“Well, I won’t say that I haven’t had my qualms, Rachel. But Matthew was real set on it,” replied Marilla with a sigh, “and it’s so seldom that he sets his mind on anything that I felt it my duty to give in.” Mrs. Rachel was wound up like a top that was unable to stop spinning.

“And there was another case six months ago over in New Brunswick,” broke in Mrs. Rachel eagerly, enjoying the sound of her own voice, “where an asylum child put strychnine in the well! The entire family died in agony.... Only it was a girl in that instance.”

“Well,” said Marilla firmly, “We are not getting a girl Rachel.”

.....

When Matthew Cuthbert reached the Bright River train station, there was no sign of any train. He tied up the mare to the hitching post at the back and ambled around to find the stationmaster locking his office.

“Isn’t the afternoon train due soon, Angus?” he enquired somewhat confused. “Been and gone a half-hour ago, Matthew” replied the business-like stationmaster. “There was a passenger dropped off for you. She’s waiting out there on the platform. I told her she could wait in the ladies’ waiting room. But she said there was more scope for her imagination outside.”

“She?” echoed Matthew hoarsely. “But it’s a boy I came for!”

“Well I dare say she can explain it all,” said Angus, chuckling to himself. “That one has a tongue of her own’.”

Matthew Cuthbert’s shyness was legendary. He dreaded all women except his sister, Marilla. His first intuition was to get back in the buggy and drive away as fast as he could. Reconsidering things he decided to investigate. He peered around the edge of the building, as if frightened of his own shadow. There was no boy in sight; only a thin, redheaded girl clutching a worn-out carpetbag. Matthew gathered his courage. The waif was gazing straight at him. He had nowhere to run as she bounded across the length of the platform straight toward him. In a flash, Matthew was staring up into a

small, thin, freckled face. The eyes that smiled down at him looked shades of green and grey. He had never stared at such a lively countenance

“I suppose you are Mr. Matthew Cuthbert of Green Gables?” she said, in a voice that was clear and sweet. “I’m awfully glad to see you. I was beginning to be afraid you weren’t coming for me today. I had made up my mind to climb up into the boughs of that big wild cherry tree and wait for you there ‘til morning. It would be lovely to sleep in a cherry tree all silvery-white with blossoms in the moonshine, don’t you think?”

“Oh . . . yes, it would. I mean no, it wouldn’t. I mean. . .” said Matthew in agony, “there’s been a big mistake.”

“Oh no, there’s no mistake,” the mysterious creature assured him eagerly, “Not if you’re Mr. Matthew Cuthbert. Mrs. Spencer told me to wait right here for you and so I’ve done. Most pleasantly, I must say. This is beautiful countryside you have here, Mr. Cuthbert.”

She was holding out her hand to him and Matthew felt forced to take it; but he did awkwardly. There and then he made up his mind what to do. He simply hadn’t the courage to tell this child with the glowing eyes that there had been a mistake. He would have to take her home. Marilla could sort out the mistake.



"I suppose you are Mr. Matthew Cuthbert of Green Gables?"

"I'm sorry I was late," he said shyly. "Come along. The horse is back in the yard."

As she climbed into the buggy, the child could barely contain her delight. "Oh, it seems so wonderful that I'm going to live with you and belong to you," she burst out. "I've never belonged to anybody before. And the asylum was the worst place I've lived in yet. I don't suppose you were ever an orphan in an asylum so you can't possibly understand what it's like. It's worse than anything you can imagine. Mrs. Spencer says it's wicked of me to talk like that. But I don't mean to be wicked. It's just so easy to be wicked without knowing it, isn't it?"



Matthew, much to his chagrin, was enjoying himself in the company of this freckled witch. He couldn't help participating in her chatter.

"Why look," she burst out, "Mr. Cuthbert! There are even more cherry trees in bloom. This island is the bloomiest place. I just love it already. I've always heard that Prince Edward Island was the most beautiful place in Canada, and I used to dream I was living here. This is the first dream that's ever come true for me."



"I've always heard that Prince Edward Island was the most beautiful place in Canada"

All at once a more sober thought occurred to Anne. She looked over at Matthew. "You know, just now I feel pretty nearly perfectly happy. I can't feel exactly perfectly happy because. . . well, what colour would you call this?" She pulled one of her long glossy braids over her slender shoulder and held it up for inspection.

Matthew was not used to reflecting on the colour of a female's hair, but in this case there couldn't be much doubt.

"It's red, ain't it?"

Anne's sigh was so profound it seemed to come from her very toes. "Yes, it's red," she reflected. "Now you can see why I'll never be perfectly happy. I know I'm skinny and a little freckled and my eyes are green. But I can imagine I have a beautiful rose-leaf complexion and lovely starry violet eyes. But I cannot imagine my red hair away. It will be my lifelong sorrow. Have you ever imagined what it must feel like to be divinely beautiful?"

Matthew swallowed. "Well now, no, I haven't..." he confessed.

"I have, often. Which would you rather be: divinely beautiful or dazzlingly clever or angelically good?"

Matthew suddenly recalled a feeling of energy from long ago in his youth, when a young girl had coaxed him to run a three-legged race at a picnic.

“Well now. . . I dunno exactly.”

“Neither do I. I know I’ll never be angelically good. Mrs. Spencer says I talk too much and... Oh, Mr. Cuthbert! Oh, Mr. Cuthbert! Oh, Mr. Cuthbert!”

That was not what Mrs. Spencer had said at all; neither had Matthew done anything other than move the reins on the buggy. However they had also rounded a curve in the road which opened up into a stretch completely canopied with wide spreading apple trees. It produced the effect of a long tent of snow-white fragrant blossoms. Below the boughs, the air was full of a purple twilight. Its beauty seemed to strike the child dumb. She leaned back on her seat and her face lifted up rapturously to enjoy the full white splendour of this magical locale.

Matthew glanced over at her. “Pretty, ain’t it? Folks call it the Avenue.”

“Pretty doesn’t seem the right word to use. Nor beautiful either. It’s the first thing I ever saw that couldn’t be improved upon by imagination. It gives me a queer, funny ache and yet it’s such a pleasant ache. Did you ever have an ache like that, Mr. Cuthbert?”

“Well now, I just can’t recollect that I ever had.”

“I have it whenever I see anything royally beautiful. They’re wrong whoever calls this place merely ‘The Avenue’. They ought to call it . . .” and here she paused as if listening to some far-away hymn sung in a cathedral, “...it ought to be christened ‘The White Way of Delight’.”

They turned out of the Avenue and drove over the crest of a hill. Below them was a still pond, glistening in the setting sun. Its water was a magnificent array of shifting hues. On the slope beyond the pond, a little white house peeked out from behind its apple orchard. “That’s Barry’s pond,” said Matthew.

“No, no. That’s not its rightful name either. I am going to call it “The Lake of Shining Waters”. I know it because whenever I hit on a name that suits something exactly, it gives me such a thrill. Do things like that ever give you a thrill, Mr. Cuthbert?”

Matthew ruminated. “Well now, yes. Digging up them ugly white grubs in the cucumber beds.”

Anne smiled and tucked her arm under his. "Yes I can see how that would be very thrilling," she acknowledged. Suddenly they had reached the crest of a steep hill. To the west, a dark church spire rose up against a marigold sky. Below was a little valley where, far back from the road, stood a farmstead, dimly white with blossoming trees in the indigo twilight of the surrounding woods.

"There," said Matthew, pointing proudly, "Yonder's Green Gables."

Anne gazed at it rapturously. "Just as soon as I saw it I felt it was home. Oh, it seems as if this must be a dream. I've pinched myself so many times today to make sure that all this was real. But it is real. And we're nearly home."

.....

Marilla briskly entered the parlour from the kitchen as Matthew entered the front hall. She stopped in her tracks when her eyes fell on the peculiar little creature clutching the worn carpetbag.

"Matthew Cuthbert," she demanded, "who is that?"

"It's a girl," answered Matthew piteously.

"I can see that. Where's the boy?"

"There weren't any. Just her," replied Matthew, turning to the fireplace and adjusting the fire irons.

"I figured we just couldn't leave her there, no matter what the mistake was."

"Well," said Marilla, as if thunderstruck, "this is a fine kettle of fish! This is what comes of sending word instead of going ourselves."

All the excitement vanished from Anne's bright little face. She grasped the full meaning of what was being said, all too quickly.

"You don't want me!" she burst into tears. "You don't want me because I'm not a boy! Nobody ever did want me. I might have known this was all too beautiful to be true!" She buried her face in her hands

Matthew and Marilla stared at each other dumbfounded. Anne's bent little body looked as if it was going to collapse in agony. Neither of them knew what to say or do. Finally Marilla spoke up. "Come now," she said awkwardly. "Don't cry so. It isn't your fault."

“Oh,” sobbed the wretched girl, “this is the most tragical thing that ever happened to me.”

Something like a reluctant smile, rusty from long disuse, softened Marilla’s grim expression. “What’s your name, child?” she asked.

“Would you please call me Cordelia?”

“Call you Cordelia! Is that your name?”

“It’s not exactly my name. But I would love to be called Cordelia. It’s such a perfectly elegant name.”



"What is your name, child?"

"What is your name child, and no more nonsense."

"Anne Shirley," answered the proud possessor of that moniker, somewhat reluctantly. "Plain old unromantic Anne Shirley."

"Unromantic— fiddlesticks!" replied Marilla, wondering if the child was simply playing on her sympathy. Anne Shirley is a fine sensible name and hardly one to be ashamed of."

"Oh, I'm not ashamed of it," verified Anne. "But if you must call me Anne, would you please be sure to spell it with an 'e'. Anne with an 'e' looks so much more distinguished. And if you'll only call me Anne with an 'e', I shall try to reconcile myself to not being called Cordelia."

"Very well then, Anne with an 'e'," interjected Marilla out of exasperation, "How is it that you happened to be brought and not a boy?"

"If I were very beautiful and had nut-brown hair, do you think then you could keep me?"

"No," said Marilla firmly. "We want a boy to help Matthew on the farm. A girl would be of no use to us." Marilla was becoming restless with what she knew convinced herself was plain tomfoolery. "Bring your bag and come along."

Anne trudged upstairs after her, "I am in the depths of despair; have you ever been in the depths of despair Miss Cuthbert." With that remark Marilla put an end to the conversation immediately.



“No I have not. To despair is to turn your back on God. Here’s your room for the night.” She shut the door and left Anne to muse over the outcome of this unfortunate error.

The shadows grew longer in the kitchen that evening and Marilla spoke her mind to Matthew as she prepared his supper.

“I’m taking her straight over to that Spencer woman in the morning. She’ll have to be sent back to the asylum, where she came from.”

“I suppose,” said Matthew reluctantly.

“You suppose! Don’t you know it?”

“She’s a real interesting little thing, Marilla. Seems a pity to send her back seeing as she’s so set on staying.”

Marilla stopped the conversation in its tracks. “Matthew Cuthbert, I believe that child has bewitched you! I can see as plain as plain you want to keep her.”

“We could hire little Jerry Buote from the creek to help me,” said Matthew, “and she’d be company for you.”

“I’m not suffering for company,” replied Marilla firmly. “Particularly not for someone who prattles on without stopping for breath. She’s going back where she came from and that’s that. I have no idea what good would she’d be to us?”

“We might be some good to her,” said Matthew suddenly and unexpectedly. Marilla was taken aback at her quiet brother’s forcefulness. After she had put her dishes away, Marilla went to bed, frowning resolutely.

Upstairs, in the east gable, she heard a lonely, desperate child crying herself to sleep.

The next morning Matthew reluctantly hitched the sorrel mare into the buggy and helped Marilla and Anne up.



“Little Jerry was around this morning and said he’s be interested in the work,” he said to Marilla trying to coax her to change her mind. “I told him I guessed I’d hire him for the summer.” Marilla gave no hint of acknowledgement, but she hit the unlucky sorrel such a vicious clip with the whip that the fat mare, unused to such treatment, whizzed indignantly down the lane at an alarming pace. Glancing back, Marilla saw her brother leaning over the gate, looking wistfully after them as they turned down the lane.

Mrs. Spencer lived in a big yellow house down by White Sands Cove. She and her daughter, Flora Jane, came running over the threshold and down the front stairs of the sunny, clapboard cottage. Marilla drove the buggy right up to the doorsteps. Surprise and welcome mingled on Mrs. Spencer’s kindly face.

“Why, Marilla,” she called out, “you’re the last person I expected to see today. I imagined you’d be getting Anne settled. And how are you, Anne?”

A cloud seemed to have descended upon Anne. "I'm as well as a victim of tragic circumstances could be, thank you," she replied tonelessly.

"The fact is, there's been some queer mistake, Sarah," explained Marilla. "We told Roberta for you to get us a boy."

"Marilla Cuthbert, you don't say so!" gasped Mrs. Spencer,

"Why Roberta distinctly said you wanted a girl."

"I suppose the asylum will take the child back?" asked Marilla.

"Well, as a matter of fact Mrs. Peter Blewett was up here yesterday, asking me if I could get her a little girl. She has ten children you know and another on the way. She's simply beside herself with desperation! Anne would be just the solution she needs."

"Excuse me, Mrs. Spencer," interrupted Anne in mortal dread,

"But would there happen to be any twins among them?"

"Why she has two sets of twins," replied Mrs. Spencer. "How did you know, child?"

"Twins seem to be my lot in life," said Anne sombrely.

Just then a shrill voice called from the road beyond, hailing Mrs. Spencer. She turned in astonishment. "I declare, if that isn't Mrs. Blewett coming up the lane this blessed minute!" she exclaimed, "Why I call this positively providential. Yoo-hoo Mathilda!"

Mrs. Blewett was a shrewish-faced woman with not an ounce of spare flesh on her bones. She looked worn-out and cranky; and she greeted the group as such.

"Mrs. Blewett, this is Anne Shirley," beamed Mrs. Spencer,

"I tell you the girl will be just the thing for you to help you with that brood of yours."

Mrs. Blewett's piercing eyes scanned Anne from stem to stern. "How old are you, girl?" she demanded.

"Thirteen," whispered Anne.

"Humph!" sniffed Mrs. Blewett, "Ain't much to you. But you're wiry and I don't know but the wiry ones can work the hardest. I'll expect you to earn your keep. And I want you to act smart and be respectful." She turned

toward Marilla. “I’ll take her off your hands this minute, Miss Cuthbert and save you the trouble of shipping her back to the mainland,” she announced as if she was doing Marilla an enormous favour. “My twins are awful fractious these days and I’m at my wits’ end...”



"Perhaps I oughtn't to make a decision until I speak to Matthew. I'll just take her home again and consult with him"

Throughout the dialogue amongst the women, Marilla had been watching Anne carefully. She had seen in her pale little face such a look of misery, that she suddenly felt moved to come to her aid.

“Well now, I don’t know,” she ruminated. “Perhaps I oughtn’t to make a decision until I speak to Matthew. I’ll just take her home again and consult him. Good afternoon, ladies.” With that Marilla cracked the whip and the buggy moved off down the lane, leaving the Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Blewett both stunned.



A faint flush of hope crept up Anne's cheeks as she and Marilla drove in silence across the meadow. "Oh, Miss Cuthbert," she whispered, as if speaking aloud might shatter the glorious possibility, "Did you really say it or did I only just imagine it?"

"I haven't said anything yet, young lady," snapped Marilla. "Sending you back to the orphanage is one thing. Handing you over to the likes of Mathilda Blewett is another. And if you can't distinguish between what is real and what isn't, I think you'd better learn to control that imagination of yours."

Anne folded her hands meekly. "I'll try to do anything you want me to, Miss Cuthbert," she said, "if only you'll keep me."

When they returned to Green Gables, Matthew met them in the lane. Marilla saw a look of sheer relief pass across his face when he saw that she had brought Anne back with her. Marilla refused to discuss the situation until much later in the day when she sought Matthew out in the barn. She desperately needed to talk things over with him.

"I wouldn't give a dog I liked to that Blewett woman," she announced cynically. Matthew continued milking the cows in silence.

"It makes no sense to keep her," stumbled Marilla, "No sense at all." This time Matthew knew enough not to reply. He just listened patiently.

"But. . ." continued Marilla, suddenly concluding her thoughts, "But if we did keep her, I'd expect you not to interfere with my methods. An old maid like me may not know much about raising a child, but I know a darn sight more than an old bachelor like you." Matthew tried to hide a smile. He

kept his eyes lowered and continued to work, so Marilla wouldn't know what he was thinking.

"I'll say one thing for her though," said Marilla with a dry chuckle, "She can talk the hind leg off a mule." Matthew finally glanced sideways. Marilla tossed a piece of straw from her hand she had been wrestling with. "Wouldn't that be a change around here!" she smirked as she got up and went back to the house. Matthew smiled privately, only when she had disappeared.

When Anne came down to breakfast the next morning, she confronted Marilla with the air of one determined to know the worst. "Oh please, Miss Cuthbert," she implored, "Tell me if you're going to send me back. I just can't bear not knowing any longer."

"Well, you'll just have to bear it," quipped Marilla, "because I simply don't know. I thought that maybe we'd just put things on trial for a while. For all our sakes. Would that suit you?"

"If you think it's necessary, Miss Cuthbert," replied Anne, sitting down at the table.

"One thing I will insist on though," continued Marilla, "is that while you're under my roof you will say your prayers. So here..." Marilla thrust an illustrated Sunday-school card under Anne's nose. "Learn that while you're eating your breakfast."

"Our father, who art in Heaven." read Anne aloud, "Hallowed be Thy name. . . why, Miss Cuthbert," she broke off delightedly, "It's just like a line of music. I'm so glad you thought of making me learn this."

"Well learn it, then, and hold your tongue," said Marilla in vexation. Out of the corner of her eye, she had caught sight of Rachel Lynde waddling through her garden. She was unsure if she was capable at that very moment of dealing with Mrs. Rachel's uninvited assessment of the newly acquired foundling.



“Can’t you send her back, Marilla?” Mrs. Rachel squawked almost as soon as she had slammed the screen door. Marilla realized immediately that Rachel had probably been one of the first townspeople in Avonlea to hear about ‘Mrs. Spencer’s mistake.’

“We’re. . . we’re still considering on it,” replied Marilla uncertainly.

“Considering. . . What is there to consider? Demanded Mrs. Rachel. “Lawful heart!” she continued, as Marilla called Anne from the parlour. Anne entered cautiously but was looking forward to being introduced. “Her looks are certainly nothing to consider Marilla. Did anyone ever see such freckles! She’s terrible skinny and homely. And her hair is as red as carrots!”



"You're a rude, unfeeling woman, and I'll never forgive you. Never, never, never"

In a single bound Anne crossed the kitchen floor and stood before Mrs. Rachel as if she were ready to pounce on her. Her lips quivered and her face was scarlet with rage. "How dare you!" she cried and her voice choked. "How dare you call me skinny and ugly? How dare you call me freckled! You're a rude, unfeeling woman, and I'll never forgive you, never, never, never" Anne stamped her feet three times in exclamation.

"Anne Shirley!" Marilla cried. But Anne, head up, eyes blazing, continued to face down Mrs. Lynde with all of the fury she could muster.

"How would you like to have nasty things said about you?" she positively fumed. "How would you like to be told that you're fat and ugly and a sour old gossip and you probably haven't a spark of imagination in you?"

"Anne!" called Marilla sharply. But it was too late. Anne had rushed from the house, slamming the screen door behind her as hard as Mrs. Rachel had when she entered the scene.

"You mark my words, Marilla," declared Mrs. Rachel darkly, "that's the kind puts strychnine in the well." Marilla set her jaw, "I won't make excuses for her, she hasn't been taught how to behave, but you were too hard on her Rachel. You should never have twitted her about her looks." said Marilla finally offering Mrs. Rachel some advice for once. Clutching her tattered dignity, Mrs. Rachel swept out into the hall toward the front door, in the opposite direction to Anne. "Goodbye, Marilla. Come down and see me when you can. But don't expect me to visit here ever again, if I'm to be treated in such a fashion." And with an air of offended majesty, Mrs. Rachel shoved herself out the front vestibule. Marilla rolled her eyes and took a deep breath.

Marilla found Anne in the garden, face down on a bench, sobbing her heart out. "Anne Shirley," she said angrily, "when I said 'trial', I never thought you'd take me literally. You had no right to speak to Mrs. Lynde in that manner."



“She had no right to say what she did” wailed Anne, her face swollen and tear-stained.

Alarmed by the banging of doors and the rushed disappearance of Mrs. Rachel, Matthew retreated from his work in the vegetable patch and made his way to the house. Upon seeing Marilla in a heated argument with an unrepentant, weeping Anne, he contemplated the situation. Knowing how acid-tongued Mrs. Lynde could be, he surmised what must have happened. Unwilling to interfere, and perturbed by Anne’s distress he returned to work.

“Rachel deserves an apology and you will go to her and give it,” he heard Marilla declare firmly.

“Oh Miss Cuthbert,” wailed Anne, “I can never do that. You can shut me up in a dark, damp dungeon inhabited by snakes and toads and feed me only on bread and water and I won’t complain. But I cannot ask Mrs. Lynde to forgive me.”

“We’re not in the habit of shutting people up in dark, damp dungeons,” said Marilla dryly, “especially as there aren’t many to be found in Avonlea. But apologize to Mrs. Lynde you must and so you shall.”

“How can I tell Mrs. Lynde I’m sorry when I’m not? I’m sorry I’ve vexed you. But I’m glad I said those things to her. I can’t even imagine I’m sorry.”

“If you expect to remain under my roof,” said Marilla, and her tone was conclusive, “you will apologize to Mrs. Lynde.”

Matthew watched feeling awkward as he saw Anne straighten her shoulders and look Marilla straight in the eye.

“Then you’ll have to send me back,” she said quietly and resolutely. Marilla stood up towering above her. She was completely bewildered by this stubborn girl. “Very well then, Anne. Go to your room.”

Matthew waited until Marilla walked across the field that evening to bring home the cows from the back pasture. With the air of an intruder, he slid into the house and crept up the backstairs. Anne was resting by the window. Her carpetbag was packed and ready at her feet.

“Ain’t been upstairs in this house in four years,” said Matthew shyly. Anne’s swollen eyes and tear-stained face touched his heart. “I guess you’re leavin’ then,” he said despondently.

“Oh Matthew, I’d rather die than apologize to Mrs. Lynde.”

Matthew sat down quietly on Anne’s bed. “Well now, Marilla’s a dreadful determined woman...dreadful determined. You don’t have to be exactly sorry, you know. You can just be sorta sorry.”

“But I’m not sorry at all,” protested Anne.

“I hear Mrs. Blewett’s an awful workhorse. Besides, Anne, it’d be awful lonesome around here without you. Couldn’t you just smooth it over?”

Anne analysed Matthew’s kind, weathered face. “You mean,” she said slowly, reading his face, “You mean, you really don’t want me to go?”

Matthew shook his head. Anne found this revelation to be motivating. She found herself opening up to Matthew instantly.

“Why Matthew, I’d do anything for you. If you really don’t want me to go, why then it certainly wouldn’t be right to let Mrs. Lynde be the cause of our parting. As you say I don’t have to be exactly sorry. I just need to remove the disgrace I’ve brought to Marilla’s good name. Don’t you think so?”

“That’s right...that’s right, Anne,” said Matthew, eagerly. “Just smooth it over so to speak. That’s what I was trying to get at.” He patted her head gently. “Don’t tell Marilla I said anything, though. She’ll say I’m interferin’ and I promised I wouldn’t... if you know what I mean?”

“Wild horses couldn’t drag it from me,” promised Anne gravely.

Smiling, Matthew slipped quietly from the gabled room, a little unnerved by his own accomplishments.

Upon her return to the house, Marilla was pleasantly surprised to find Anne soberly entering the kitchen. "I'm sorry I lost my temper and said those rude things, Miss Cuthbert," she said meekly, "and I'm willing to go and tell Mrs. Lynde so."



"Very well," Marilla replied. She was relieved but showed no sign of it. The last few hours of her walk to the back pasture had been agonizing as she debated what she should do if Anne did not give in. "I'll take you over first thing. Now get up to bed and don't forget to say your prayers." She barely looked at Anne. Luckily she did not see Anne smile at Matthew or she would have been even more perturbed.

As Anne quietly ascended the stairs, Marilla turned to her brother. "I knew she'd come to her senses if we left her alone," she said with authority. Matthew merely nodded and sipped his tea; terrified lest Marilla figure out he had had 'put his oar in'.

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Mrs. Rachel Lynde was sitting in her usual position at the observation deck on her front veranda. Marilla solemnly walked Anne up the lush garden path rimmed with June lilies and delphiniums. Before a word could be spoken, Anne dropped to her knees in front of a speechless Mrs. Rachel.

"Oh, Mrs. Lynde, I am so extremely sorry," she said with a trembling voice; "I have disgraced my good friends who have let me stay at Green Gables even though I am not a boy. What you said was true. I am skinny and ugly and my hair is red." Then Anne slyly interjected, "What I said about you was true too, only I shouldn't have said it." Marilla braced herself, but the comment breezed past Rachel who was quite taken aback by the whole scenario. Anne continued on, "Oh, please, Mrs. Lynde, please forgive me."

You wouldn't be so cruel as to inflict a lifelong sorrow on a poor orphan, would you? Please say you forgive me!" Anne's eyes were full of profound emotion.

All bitterness evaporated from Mrs. Lynde's sympathetic, if overbearing, heart.

"There, there, child," she said warming up to Anne completely, "of course I forgive you. You mustn't mind me. I'm known throughout these parts as a woman who speaks her mind. And don't you worry another minute about your hair. I knew a girl once who had hair every bit as red as yours. But when she grew up, it darkened into a real handsome auburn."

Anne drew a deep breath as she rose to her feet. "You have given me hope, Mrs. Lynde," she said quite inspired at the compliment, "I shall always think of you as a benefactress."

"Laws, Marilla," said Rachel, strangely satisfied at this grandiose performance, "all this child needs is discipline and a proper education. The Sunday school picnic's is scheduled this week in Barry's field. I want you to take Anne so she can meet some civilized children her own age. And trial or no trial, you ought to put the child into school." Marilla rolled her eyes to herself, stunned at how easily her self-important neighbour had been won over.

As Marilla walked Anne along the lane near Mrs. Lynde's field she watched the child basking in the sunshine as if she were somewhere else far away. Marilla broke the silence by bringing up the subject of school.

"Putting you in school doesn't mean I've come to a decision, Anne. It's just as easy to take you out as put you in."

Anne came back to reality and smiled at Marilla. "It does give a person room to hope, though, Miss Cuthbert. Besides, my temper will never get the better of me again, and I never do the same wrong thing twice, that's the one good thing about me, I can promise you that."



“I hope not,” said Marilla quietly. “In the first place good behaviour is more important than theatrical apologies afterward.”

“I thought since I had to do it, I might as well do it thoroughly.”

“Save your thoroughness for prayer, Anne. God does not want a fair-weather friend.”

“The only real friend I ever had in my whole life was Katie Maurice,” said Anne tenderly, “and she was really just my window friend.”

“Window friend?”

“I discovered her in the window of Mrs. Thomas’ bookcase. It was the only window that hadn’t been smashed by her intoxicated husband. I lived with the Thomases before I lived with the Hammonds. I used to wish I knew the spell to step through the glass into Katie’s world which was so beautiful.”



Marilla was shocked at this innocent revelation. She decided that in addition to needing a firm hand, Anne was starved for affection.



"It does give a person reason to hope, though, Miss Cuthbert"

"Well I don't think you should have window friends anymore, Anne," suggested Marilla hesitantly. For a while they walked on in silence. Then Anne spoke again. "Do you think I shall ever have a bosom friend, Miss Cuthbert?" she asked.

"A... a what kind of friend?"

A bosom friend. A really kindred spirit. I've dreamt of meeting her all my life."

“Diana Barry lives over there on Orchard Slope,” Marilla pointed in the direction of the pond. “She’s about your age. Her parents are sponsoring the picnic next Sunday. Of course you can meet her then.” Anne replied dreamily, “Diana of the Lake of Shining Waters ... she sounds just like a heroine in a novel.” Anne found herself slipping her hand into Marilla’s and the old spinster found herself not refusing the demonstration.

Something warm and pleasant welled up in Marilla’s heart at the touch of that thin little hand in hers. Perhaps it was a vague pang of the motherhood that had passed her but, whatever it was, the flush of happiness to her heart took her by surprise.

From then on, and throughout that week, Anne thought picnic, talked picnic and dreamed nothing but picnic. But, a couple of days before the celebrated event was to take place, a distressed Marilla called Anne downstairs to have a word about something.

“Anne,” she said, “Have you touched my amethyst brooch? I know I stuck it in my pincushion when I came home from church, but I can’t find it anywhere.”

“I . . . I did touch it,” admitted Anne sheepishly. “It’s such a perfectly elegant brooch. I pinned it on yesterday, just for a minute. Amethysts are my idea of what diamonds could be like, Marilla. And I knew I’d never see a real diamond. I think such lovely purple stones must be the souls of good violets, don’t you?”

Marilla was in no mood for fanciful speculation. “You had no right to meddle with my things, Anne. That brooch isn’t anywhere on the bureau. You can’t have put it back.”

“I did put it back,” said Anne quickly—or pertly, Marilla thought. “I just don’t remember whether I stuck it on the pincushion or laid it in that little china tray on the bureau. But I am perfectly certain I put it back where I found it.”

“I’ll go and have another look,” said Marilla, determined to be fair. “If you put that brooch back, it’s there still. If it isn’t, I’ll know you didn’t. Put the dishes away that were left in the sink.”

Marilla returned to her room and made a thorough search, not only over the bureau but in every other possible place such a piece of jewellery could possibly have fallen. It was nowhere to be found.

“Anne,” she said, entering the kitchen, “the brooch is gone. By your own admission, you were the last person to handle it. Now what have you done with it? Tell me the truth at once. Did you take it out and lose it?”

“No, I didn’t,” said Anne, meeting Marilla’s gaze squarely. “I never took the brooch out of your room and that’s the truth, if I was to be led to the block for it— although I’m not very certain what a block is. So there, Marilla.”

Anne’s ‘so there’ was only intended to emphasize what she had said, but Marilla took it as a display of defiance. She lost her composure.

“I believe you are telling me a falsehood, Anne,” she said sharply. “Go to your room and stay there until you are ready to confess.”

“You will let me out for the picnic, won’t you?” asked Anne as she obediently left the room and went upstairs, “I just have to go to the picnic, Marilla.”

“You’re not going to the picnic or anywhere else until you tell me the truth.” Marilla replied indignantly.

“But if I don’t go to the picnic, how will I ever make a bosom friend? Or any friend at all?”

“That brooch meant a great deal to me, Anne. More than any picnic. Now off to your room.” Anne sauntered up the stairs confused and hurt.

The next few days were troubled ones for Marilla. She emptied out drawers. She combed through every crack and cranny. Still no brooch appeared. Anne, who remained confined to her room, still refused to admit she had taken it.

“Now I see I was right not to be too hasty about keeping her,” confided Marilla to Matthew the Sunday of the picnic when she was in the kitchen preparing breakfast.

“We can’t keep a liar and a thief, and you know it, Matthew.”

Matthew was mystified. He had to admit that Anne’s self-admitted evidence pointed to her as being the only one who could have lost the brooch. Matthew had trouble losing faith in her though. When Marilla took Anne’s breakfast up to her on a tray, she found the child sitting on the edge of the bed, looking pale and resolute.

“I’m ready to confess, Marilla.”

Marilla put down the tray. She felt no sense of triumph. This response had been far too long in coming this time. “Let me hear what you have to say then—and be quick about it.”

Anne began a tale that sounded as if she were repeating a lesson she had memorized. “I took the brooch,” she said, “because I was overcome by an irresistible temptation. I was imagining I was Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald and I just had to wear the brooch as I trod the footbridge over the Lake of Shining Waters. I removed the brooch to admire how it shone in the sunlight. And then, as I leaned over the bridge, to gaze at my reflection in that glistening lake, with the wind blowing through my auburn hair, the brooch suddenly just slipped through my fingers and sank, all purple and sparkling, beneath the rippling waves. And that’s the best I can do at confessing. Now may I go to the picnic?”

Hot anger flooded Marilla’s heart. This child had taken her most-prized possession and lost it! Now she sat there calmly reciting details, without the least indication of remorse.

“You won’t be going to any picnic, Anne Shirley I can assure you of that. You can pack your bags and start imagining life with Mrs. Blewett!” without a moment’s hesitation, Marilla marched down the stairs to get ready for church.

“Rachel Lynde was completely within her right,” she fumed at Matthew as she threw her shawl over her shoulders, “I should never have let that child worm her way into my affections.”



“Marilla!” Matthew’s forlorn appearance was suddenly transformed into delight. “Marilla, look at that!” Something shiny was caught in the loose

threads of Marilla's patterned shawl. Whatever it was glittered and sparkled.

Marilla, in shock, seized it immediately. It was absolutely the amethyst brooch in all the glory of its rich, violet colour!

"Dear life and heart!" said Marilla stone-faced, "how can it be?

Here's my brooch safe and sound that I presumed was at the bottom of Barry's pond."

She hurried up the stairs and into Anne's room, taking a deep breath; she stopped and looked at the child gazing out the window. "Whatever made you say you took it and lost it?" she enquired, holding out the brooch and feeling foolish.

"You said you'd keep me in my room until I confessed," Anne replied exhausted. "I simply had to go to the picnic and so I thought out a confession last night in bed, and I tried to make it as compelling as I could."

"But it was still a lie," objected Marilla.

"You wouldn't believe the truth," said Anne plainly. Marilla set her jaw. Her conscience got the better of her. "Anne Shirley, you do beat all! But I was wrong...I see that now. I shouldn't have doubted your word when I've never known you to tell a lie. Of course, it wasn't right to confess to something you hadn't done. But I drove you to it." She stretched out her hand to the child. "So I'll forgive you if you'll forgive me and we'll start square again. Now get dressed for the service. And this afternoon the two of us will go to the picnic together."



That afternoon would glimmer forever in Anne's childhood memory with a special light. She sampled ice cream for the first time in her life, and found it to be an experience she could only describe in one word as 'sublime'. Best of all, she at last met the bosom friend she had yearned for so long. Diana Barry was pretty enough to satisfy even Anne's beauty-starved heart. Her hair was thick and raven-dark, her cheeks were rosy, and her black eyes danced with merriment.

"She reads entirely too much," her mother confided to Marilla, as they watched the two girls begin the niceties of first conversation, "and I can't prevent her, for her father aids and abets her. I'm glad she has the prospect of a playmate. Perhaps it'll take her out-of-doors more." Marilla nodded agreeably.

Diana and Anne wandered bashfully down to the river. When Anne finally spoke, it was almost in a whisper. "Diana," she asked almost afraid of any response, "do you think... do you think you can like me enough to be my bosom friend?"



Diana laughed. Diana always laughed before she spoke. "Why, I guess so," she said frankly. "I'm awfully glad you've come to live at Green Gables, Anne. There isn't any other girl who lives near enough to play with, and I've no sisters big enough."

Anne let out a huge sigh of relief at the exhilaration that now warmed her heart. Spying a gang of children, who were yelling and laughing, she yanked Diana's hand and pulled her up to the field.

"C'mon," she commanded, "we can't afford to miss the races!"

After an exhausting time running, chattering and laughing with the others, the two girls sat together contentedly by the pond. They dangled their toes in the water, and watched the rowboats gliding by.

“There’s Mr. Phillips, our teacher,” Diana pointed at a young man with glasses who was gazing expressively at the pretty girl across him in the bow. “You’ll meet him when you start school. That’s Prissy Andrews with him. He’s helping her study for her entrance to Queen’s. He’s dead gone on her. Prissy’s got a beautiful complexion and he moons over her something terrible.”

Another rowboat passed by with a gaggle of giggling girls. One of them was leaning over the edge, trying to reach a water lily.

“That Josie Pye,” commented Diana scornfully. “She’s always looking for attention. ‘Specially from Gilbert Blythe.” Anne followed Diana’s look towards a tall boy with curly brown hair, sitting on the nearby bank.

“Don’t you think he’s handsome?” inquired Diana, “Josie Pye certainly does.”

Just then, the boat full of giggling girls slanted more and more towards the water until they tipped and Josie fell into the water with a lot of dramatic screams for help.

“I hope she nearly drowns,” muttered Diana pitilessly.

“Oh I wish it had been me Diana,” sighed Anne, carried away by the overwhelming excitement surrounding Josie. “It must be such a romantic experience to nearly drown.”

Diana burst out laughing. “What a strange girl you are, Anne Shirley! I can tell you and I are going to get along really well.”

Anne could not have asked for anything more.

Anne’s first morning at school started off perfect to a tee. Mr. Phillips took careful notation of her name, then directed her to share a seat with Diana. Anne was thrilled.

As she sat beside Diana and began arranging her books and pencils, Gilbert Blythe suddenly took it into his head to tease this new red-haired student. Gilbert had an irresistible urge to make her look at him. Anne was interested in school and Diana and nothing else. Gilbert Blythe wasn’t used to having to strain himself to make a girl look at him. Anne ignored all of

his faces and efforts to rile her. She should look at him he decided. “Who does she think she is with the pointed chin and big eyes...?” he thought. He also recognized that Anne’s eyes weren’t like the eyes of any other girl in the Avonlea school. Reaching across the aisle, he decided to pick up the end of one of Anne’s long braids. He held it triumphantly at arm’s length for a moment staring at it and then he hissed one word: “Carrots!”



Anne turned and completely lost the composure she had worked so hard to maintain since the Lynde incident. She did more than scream. She sprang to her feet. “You mean, hateful boy!” she cried, “How dare you!”

Before Anne could think about controlling her anger, she lashed out. Crack! She picked up her slate and brought it down on Gilbert’s head with such force that the slate broke clean into pieces which flew all over the desk and floor.

The whole class fell silent in horrified delight. In the immediate hush that followed, Mr. Phillips stalked down the aisle and laid his heavy hand on Anne’s shoulder.

“Anne Shirley, what is the meaning of this?” he demanded. Gilbert spoke up stalwartly. “It was my fault, Mr. Phillips. I teased her.”

Mr. Phillips did not even hear Gilbert’s excuse. He was livid as he grimly ordered Anne to the front of the class, whereupon he proceeded to scrawl on the blackboard for the entire class to see:

ANN SHIRLEY HAS A VERY BAD TEMPER.

Then he read it out loud, so that even the primary students, who couldn't read very well, were able to understand. "You will write this out 100 times before leaving today," he bellowed.



With a pale, mortified face Anne did as she was told. Before beginning, she couldn't resist reaching up and adding an 'e' to Mr. Phillips' misspelling of ANN inscribed on the board.

Once school was dismissed, Anne left the horrible classroom with her red head held high. Gilbert Blythe tried to stop her at the school door, but Anne would have none of it. She swept by him indignantly.

"I'm awful sorry I made fun of your hair, Anne," he whispered apologetically. "Honest I am. Don't be mad at me for keeps."

Anne kept her gaze straight ahead, without even a glance or any indication she had heard Gilbert.

"Oh Anne, how could you?" breathed Diana as they hurried away to the safety of the lane, where they could finally talk.

Diana admired Anne's gumption, but she was enthralled by Gilbert and was having a difficult time understanding what had really happened. Diana felt that she could never have resisted Gilbert's plea. "Gilbert makes fun of all the girls," she said assuredly. "Why he calls me crow-head all the time—because my hair's so black—and I've never heard him apologize to a soul before either."

"There's a world of difference between being called crow-head and being called carrots," sniffed Anne. "I shall never forgive Gilbert Blythe. Ever! An iron has entered my soul, Diana. My mind is made up. My red hair is a curse."

Exactly what Anne meant or intended do at that moment she wasn't certain. She knew she was beyond tolerating her hair any longer and was convinced that take drastic measures were in order to remedy the situation.

It wasn't until that evening that Marilla discovered the extent of Anne's exasperation with her looks. Upon hearing from Rachel Lynde about Anne's disastrous day at school, Marilla had gone upstairs to confront Anne about her behaviour. She arrived to find the gable bedroom door locked tight.

"Anne Shirley!" she called, knocking on the oak door as hard as she could,

"I've heard all about it. Now you open this door at once!"

"Please go away, Marilla," came the barely audible response, "I am in the depths of despair!"

"Despair, fiddlesticks!" demanded Marilla, "You open this door immediately!"

Marilla heard the thick bolt being opened unwillingly. Even before Marilla was over the threshold of the room, Anne dove back into bed, throwing the covers over herself so that she was completely in hiding. Marilla was not about to tolerate any theatrics. She yanked the comforter and threw back the sheets. What she saw immobilized her.

"Anne Shirley," she gasped in shock, "what have you done to your hair! Why, it's green!"

Green it most certainly was; a queer, dull, bronzy green, with streaks here and there of the original red to heighten the ghastly effect. Marilla had never seen anything so grotesque as Anne's hair at that very moment.

"Oh Marilla," sobbed Anne curled up in a ball in the bed-sheets. "I thought nothing could be as bad as red hair. Green is ten times worse. You little know how utterly wretched I am."

"I little know how you got into this fix, but I demand that you tell me!"

"I dyed it," wailed Anne. "He positively assured me it would turn my hair a beautiful raven black!"

"Who did? Who are you talking about, child?"

"The peddler we met on the road today. Oh, Marilla, what shall I do? I'll never be able to live this down. I can't never face him again. That Gilbert Blythe had no right to call me carrots!"

Marilla sat down on the bed beside the woebegone little girl.

"Did you really smash your slate over that boy's head?" she inquired, suddenly very interested in Anne's plight.



"I shall never forgive Gilbert Blythe. The iron has entered my soul, Diana. My mind is made up. My red hair is a curse"

Had Anne looked up, she would have seen a smile glimmering in Marilla's eyes. However Anne was far too sunken in her own grief to really notice. "I'm afraid I did," she gulped and sobbed.

"Hard?" asked Marilla. Her smile was undeniable as it spread across her face.

"Very hard, yes." Marilla gave Anne her hanky to blow her nose.

Marilla put her arm around Anne. "I should be furious with you, Anne," she whispered, "your first day at school. What a way to behave. But. . . if you promise me that nothing of this sort will ever happen again, I won't say another word about it."

"You mean. . . you're not going to send me away," asked Anne, unable to believe her ears.

Marilla smiled thoughtfully as she sat Anne up. "As a matter of fact I've come to a decision," she said. "Your trial is over, Anne. You can stay at Green Gables."

Anne sat bolt upright in bed, oblivious to the frightening green meson her head. She stared at Marilla wondering if she had missed some inflection in Marilla's response that would dissolve this dream. "Stay at Green Gables. . .?" she asked again slowly. "With you and Matthew? Oh Marilla!" she flung her arms around the woman in a grand display of real affection, "Do you mean I can really belong to you now?"

Marilla stood up, gently disengaging herself from Anne's arms. "Something tells me you and I may be kindred spirits after all child" she quipped as she left the room. Anne was in heaven, though she didn't quite twig to the meaning in Marilla's parting glance.

That evening, while Matthew drank his tea in the kitchen, Marilla proceeded to cut Anne's hair. Wrapped in sheets, Anne surveyed the green curls lying on the floor. When Marilla had finished, Matthew put his arm around Anne trying to make her feel better as she recoiled from her reflection in the mirror.



"You're our girl now," he said with pride, "and the prettiest one this side of Halifax." Anne smiled appreciatively, but shook her head at the haircut that now made her resemble so many of the boys at school

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Anne's hair grew back to its former length over the summer. She began to take pride in its glossy, thick character. Her happiness grew too. She and Diana spent long days together, running along sandy beaches, making up stories for each other or sharing secrets, as good friends are inclined to do. Her ambition to do well in school became increasingly important to her and her grades improved over the course of the year. By the springtime, she found that she was doing almost as well as Gilbert Blythe. Mr. Phillips

liked to pit the students against each other during their monthly spelling bee and Anne was keen to excel. "Miss Andrews," he said, smiling mindlessly at Prissy, "could you give us the spelling of the word 'chrysanthemum'?" Anne was not certain why Mr. Phillips decided to put his beloved Prissy on the spot, but Anne readied herself for the challenge.

Prissy rose nervously. Spelling was not her strong point. "C-h-i.. .No! C-h-r-i-s...Oh gosh!.. .a-n-s-amum. . .," she said all in a tizzy.

"Gilbert?" faltered poor Mr. Phillips, trying to conceal his disappointment. Gilbert stood up. "c - h - r - y - s - a - n - t - h - a - m - u - m" he said confidently.

Mr. Phillips' brow darkened. "Anne?" he inquired of his top speller. Anne didn't even flinch as she rose confidently from her desk.

"c - h - r - y - s - a - n - t - h - E - m - u - m!"

"Correct," said Mr. Phillips satisfied that he could always rely on her.

Mr. Phillips took note, however, that Anne sat down with a smug toss of her head at Gilbert. He thought Anne was being conceited. Josie Pye looked crestfallen for Gilbert's sake. Josie secretly despised Anne because she knew deep down how much Gilbert wanted to be friends with his redheaded rival.

"Hey, Anne!" she jeered later, as Anne and Diana left the playground for home, "How d'you spell 'freckles?' "

"Hey Josie!" shouted a quick-witted Diana, "How d'you spell 'ugly?'" Josie sneered.

Gilbert ran after the two girls. "Congratulations on the spelling test, Anne," he said courteously.

Anne merely nodded at him coldly. "Thank you, Mr. Blythe. And I might as well warn you now that from here on in I shall be first in every subject." Grasping Diana's hand as hard as he could, she swept off past an astounded Gilbert. Anne had firmly made up her mind to hate Gilbert Blythe to the end of her days.



.....

“Don’t we have enough flowers right outside our door, Anne?” asked Marilla, as she hurried to set her straw hat firmly on her head. It was a hot summer afternoon, and Marilla was dressed in her Sunday finery. Anne took a deep breath and savoured the thick perfume from the bouquet she had picked carefully and that she had arranged in the front hall in a spectacular display.

“I want the house to look impressive when Diana arrives,” she explained looking for Marilla’s approval. Diana was invited to tea this particular afternoon, and Anne, wearing her second best dress in honour of this rare event, was permitted to be hold the affair all on her own. “May I use the rosebud-spray tea set, Marilla?” she asked.

“No indeed! The everyday set will do well enough for your company,” proclaimed Marilla, finding her purse and gloves. “But you may have the fruit cake and the cherry preserves. And there’s a bottle of raspberry cordial on the second shelf in the pantry cupboard.”

“Oh Marilla,” cried Anne her hands held together, “how perfectly lovely! I promise to be a perfect hostess and to act completely grown-up.”

Marilla made one final adjustment to her hat in the hall mirror. “Now don’t forget to tell Matthew that Mrs. Allan will drive me back from the Ladies Aid meeting. And remember to see that Matthew and Jerry’s supper is laid out for them when they come in from the field.”

At that instant a precise rap was heard on the door behind Marilla. Diana had arrived wearing her high button boots, gloves and her second best

dress. She removed her elegant straw hat as Anne welcomed her into the front hall. The two girls looked like perfect ladies.

“Have a lovely afternoon ladies,” beamed Marilla as she left, thinking proudly how much Anne and Diana had matured this summer. The girls shook hands formally. “Do come in and make yourself comfortable Diana,” said Anne using her best manners.

“Why, thank you, how kind of you,” replied Diana as she entered the parlour gracefully.

Once they arrived in the little sitting area off the dining room, both girls sat side by side on a settee, their hands folded primly on their laps. After making polite enquiries of each other as to Mrs. Barry’s health and Matthew’s potato crop, Anne and Diana couldn’t wait to relieve themselves of the burden of looking dignified. They were soon talking and laughing as usual. Diana was feeling awfully hungry as well, so Anne decided that the chit-chat should end.

“It isn’t good manners to tell your guests what you’re serving, so I won’t tell you what Marilla said we could have to drink. But it begins with an ‘r’ and a ‘c’ and it’s a bright red colour,” proclaimed Anne, as she bounded into the pantry to find the delicious bottle Marilla had promised she could serve.

Anne looked and looked though. There was nothing to be found on the second shelf of the pantry cupboard, where Marilla had told her to look. Further moving of cans and containers revealed a bottle away back on the top shelf. Anne took out the unlabelled bottle and examined it. She put a tumbler on a tray, and set the bottle on a table beside Diana.

“Raspberry cordial. I knew it! My very favourite!” exclaimed Diana gleefully.

“I’m so glad you like it,” said Anne trying to be proper. “I’ve never tasted it before in my entire life. I shall have to wait, though, because first I have to run out and stir the fire up. Help yourself to as much as you want, though Diana.”



"The nicest I ever drank"

Anne went about preparing tea and from the kitchen she entertained Diana with a new tale she was writing about in her journal. When Anne came back from the kitchen with the tea tray ready, Diana was enthusiastically gulping down her second glass of cordial. She made no protest when Anne proceeded to offer her a third generous tumblerful—like the previous ones had been.

"That cordial's the nicest I ever drank," declared Diana. Her words sounded slurred. Anne became concerned when her friend suddenly belched—Loudly. "It's ever so much nicer than Mrs. Lynde's although she brags about hers so much." Diana blathered on. "It doesn't taste a bit like hers."

"That's probably because Marilla is such a better cook," said Anne staring at, Diana while she poured her a cup of tea. "Why Diana, whatever is the matter?" Diana began to try to stand up, but she swayed from side to side. Then she suddenly collapsed onto the settee, holding onto her stomach.

"I'm awful sick," she stammered in a thick voice, "I . . . I gotta go home!" But instead of getting up again, she completely slumped over onto the settee again, moaning and groaning.

"Diana you mustn't dream of going home without having tea," cried Anne in distress. "Your stomach's grumbling because you haven't had a thing to eat. Do try some fruitcake and this delicious cherry preserve!" At that Anne thrust a plate of rich cakes and sweets under Diana's nose. Diana took one glance at the plate and buried her face in her lace-trimmed handkerchief.

“Perhaps a little more cordial would do the trick,” wondered Anne desperately trying to be helpful. She filled Diana’s tumbler once again to the brim and scrutinized her. Diana obediently slugged the drink down. This time the cordial unquestionably made Diana feel worse. To Anne’s horror Diana keeled over this time landing flat on her face on the sofa.

“I must go home. . .” she garbled, into the pillows.

“No, no, Diana. Just stretch out on the sofa for a little while longer and you’ll feel better. Where does it hurt?”

Diana’s response was muffled in the sofa cushions. It was clear to Anne that her beloved guest really needed to go home immediately and she stopped trying to detain Diana. She helped her get to her feet. Diana felt the room start to sway around her.

“I never heard of company going home without tea!” mourned Anne as she helped her collect her hat and gloves. Suddenly Diana pushed past Anne as if she was going to be ill. She lunged across the room and out the door much to Anne’s complete chagrin and terror.

With tears of disappointment in her eyes, Anne found Diana’s parasol and hurried out the door after her. Diana stumbled across the meadow, Anne on her heels.

Mrs. Barry, Diana’s mother, was enjoying her afternoon tea with Mrs. Lynde. Seated on the Barry porch, they had spent a good deal of time working together on a quilt while discussing Avonlea gossip.

All of a sudden Mrs. Barry heard Diana tottering across the porch in agony. Glancing around the corner of the veranda she witnessed her daughter stagger up the steps. Diana stood swaying in front of her, with crossed eyes. Mrs. Barry turned to Mrs. Lynde stupefied.

“She’s Drunk! Drunk as a coot!” exclaimed Rachel Lynde, who had tossed the quilt aside in the wake of this scandal. Diana belched right in Mrs. Lynde’s face and the good lady was met with a cloud of alcohol-laden breath.

“My Diana? No! It isn’t possible. . .” whispered Mrs. Barry, who felt as if she part of someone’s nightmare. To make matters worse Diana clasped her hand over her mouth and ran back down the veranda stairs to be violently ill all over her mother’s renowned June lilies. As calm settled over the

scene, Anne Shirley, her eyes wide as saucers, stood alone before the two matriarchs. All three stared down at Diana who was now lying in the flowerbed!

"Anne Shirley!" Mrs. Barry turned on Anne hard-heartedly. "What did you ever give my Diana to drink?"

"Only... only raspberry... cordial, Mrs. Barry," stumbled Anne.

"Raspberry cordial my foot!" snorted Rachel Lynde. "Why that girl smells like Jake Griffith's distillery!"

Mrs. Barry was beside herself. Not only was Mrs. Rachel Avonlea's most proclaimed gossip, she was also chairwoman of the temperance society. The Barry family's good name would be in ruins and Rachel Lynde would have a field day with this outlandish tale. Mrs. Barry knew exactly who was to take the blame.

"You are a wicked, wicked girl, Anne Shirley," she flashed. "I should never have let Diana associate with a foundling like you. She is forbidden to ever see you again. Leave our property at once!"

Anne tried to protest and attempted to offer an explanation, but nothing would calm Mrs. Barry. Anne was silenced by the sight of the women's hostile expressions as they desperately worked to hoist a comatose Diana out of the garden. It was a subdued Anne who quietly placed Diana's hat, gloves and parasol on the veranda steps and fled for her life.

Marilla arrived home after supper as scheduled and found Anne weeping on the back veranda chaise. Matthew and Jerry were cleaning up their own dishes. Marilla was stunned. Matthew raised his eyebrows, uncertain as to what had happened or what to do. Marilla motioned for he and Jerry to leave.



"Now stop crying, Anne. This is not your fault. I'll have to go over and explain the blunder to Mrs. Barry"

"Whatever has happened now, Anne?" she demanded in dismay. "I pray you haven't been saucy to Mrs. Rachel again."

Anne was unable to mouth a single word. She erupted with more tears and hysterical sobs!

"Anne Shirley, when I ask you a question I expect an answer! Enough theatrics, and sit up this very minute and tell me what in heaven's name has got you into this state."

Anne; tragedy personified, sat up and tried desperately to control her emotions.

"Mrs. Barry says that I set Diana drunk," she yowled. "And she says I must be a thoroughly bad, wicked girl, and she's forbidden Diana to ever, ever play with me again. Oh, Marilla, I am too overcome with woe."

An amazed Marilla stared at the child vacantly. "Drunk!" she said, when she had finally found her own voice. "What on earth did you give her to drink? "

"Nothing but raspberry cordial," wailed Anne. "I never thought it would make her drunk, Marilla, even if she did drink three big tumblers full."

At that Marilla marched into the kitchen. She returned immediately with the evidence. Her face was purple in anger and surprise.

"You certainly have a genius for trouble, child," she said angrily. "This is currant wine, not raspberry cordial. I must have put the cordial in the cellar myself instead of in the pantry cupboard. Now stop crying, Anne. This is not your fault. I'll have to go over and explain the blunder to Mrs. Barry."

Marilla quickly discovered that Mrs. Barry was not the least bit interested in any explanation. She was all too prepared to turn on Anne again, despite Marilla's protests.

"You're wrong Marilla. Don't bother to cover it up. Anne Shirley is a sly, deceitful child, and she's pulled the wool well over your eyes too" she snapped.

Mrs. Rachel Lynde was also eager to throw her opinion into the ring as well.

"Even if it's as you say Marilla, I've warned you before about that currant wine," she announced self-righteously. "It's the demon liquor that's at fault here, and if you didn't insist on making that wine. . ." This was more than Marilla could take.

"My currant wine is famous all over this island, as well you know, Rachel Lynde!" she interrupted rudely. "Why even the Reverend Allan himself takes a drop when he comes calling. And as to Christian virtue, making a little wine for refreshment is far less sinful than meddling in other people's affairs!" At that both women fell into stunned silence. Before either of them could offer a suitably sarcastic retort, Marilla turned on her heel and marched out of the Barry parlour in a veritable tornado of indignation.

The next morning Marilla exorcized her leftover anger by scrubbing the kitchen floor. Anne obediently busied herself by helping Marilla with the chores. When she chanced to look sideways out the kitchen window, she was stunned to see Diana waving anxiously from across the field. Without telling anyone, Anne was out of the kitchen and running desperately to meet her dear friend, hopeful that Marilla's tongue-lashing had made Mrs. Barry change her mind. That hope evaporated when she saw Diana's swollen eyes and pale face.



Anne confronted Diana. "Your mother hasn't forgiven me, has she?" Diana shook her head gravely. "I told her it wasn't your fault and I've cried and cried. But it's positively no use. We can never be friends again."

"Oh Diana," Anne broke into tears. "We must remain friends in secret, at least. Will you swear to be my secret bosom friend?"

Diana looked even more frightened. "But isn't it wicked to swear?" she asked doubtfully. "We're in enough trouble already."

"Not if you're swearing a vow," Anne assured her. Taking Diana's hand in her own, she intoned: "I solemnly swear to remain faithful to my bosom friend Diana Barry as long as the sun and the moon shall endure. Now you say it, Diana."

When Diana had repeated the vow to Anne's satisfaction, Anne pulled out her little patchwork scissors from her apron pocket. "Now wilt thou give me a lock of thy jet-black tresses?" she enquired soulfully.

"But I don't have any black dresses," objected Diana, puzzled. "Your hair, silly," said Anne, temporarily dropping her tragic actress voice.

"Oh. My hair. Yes, of course," agreed Diana.

After the hair-cutting ceremony was over, the friends hugged each other sadly. Then Anne stood and watched Diana run out of sight. Their romantic parting had been almost as satisfying as having Mrs. Barry weep and forgive her. "Fare thee well, my beloved friend," she whispered. "Henceforth we must be as strangers, living side by side. But my heart will be ever faithful to thee."

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Anne was beside herself with grief at being separated from her bosom friend, but she surprised herself by carrying on valiantly. However, as week after solitary week passed, it became clear that Mrs. Barry would likely

never relent, Anne yearned for Diana more because of it. She threw herself into her studies with all her heart, in order to dull the pain.

When the new school year commenced the Avonlea pupils were stunned to learn that Mr. Phillips would not return. Happily, he was replaced by a new teacher by the name of Miss Stacey. She was full of energy and new ideas about teaching and learning. Her first morning in the schoolhouse she stood up and announced “I want to look back on this class as having been the most imaginative, the most committed students on Prince Edward Island,” Anne’s soul rose from the ashes of despair and soared to new heights. In Miss Stacey, Anne found a kindred spirit who would become her supportive ally to help Anne balance the loss of her best friend.

“She has such a gentle voice, and when she says my name, I feel instinctively that she’s spelling it with an ‘e’,” Anne confided to Matthew at home.

Miss Stacey became instinctively aware that there was trouble surrounding Diana and Anne. A warning visit from Mrs. Barry made it crystal clear that this was a serious problem that required delicate intervention. She mentioned Mrs. Barry’s visit to Anne one day after school. “I don’t think, Anne” she smiled with a twinkle in her eye, “that Mrs. Barry entirely approves of you.”



“I’m afraid you’re right, Miss Stacey,” she sighed, “but then I don’t think God Himself would meet entirely with Mrs. Barry’s approval.” Anne stopped herself from commenting further. Miss Stacey reassured her, “the truth will set you free someday Anne. Anne looked up. “I think I can cope with the social persecution of being an orphan,” she replied “I’ve grown used to that. But it is a terrible injustice to be falsely accused.”

“What we must bear in mind, Anne,” said Miss Stacey, “is that all these trials and troubles that pop up in our lives often serve a useful purpose. They build character. And remember, tomorrow is always fresh with no mistakes in it.”

“It’s just that I miss Diana terribly, Miss Stacey.”

Miss Stacey patted Anne’s hand. “Don’t lose heart, child.

Diana will always be your friend, no matter what anyone accuses you of.”

“The truth will set you free...someday,” echoed Anne. Miss Stacey’s empathy touched her and she was heartened to feel that the new teacher was someone she could rely on to the very depths of her soul.

Several weeks later Anne was in the kitchen helping Marilla prepare dinner.

“Go fetch that leftover sauce from the pantry, child,” instructed Marilla. “I’ll warm it up for tonight’s pudding.”

Anne skipped into the pantry. As she retrieved the pudding bowl, she peered into the sauce and immediately covered her mouth in shock. There, floating in the thick liquid, was a mouse that had drowned trying to taste the delicacy. Anne guiltily recalled that the night before, Marilla had asked her to cover the bowl. She immediately reached for a ladle, scooped out the pathetic little mischief-maker and silently wrapped it in newspaper—on guard lest Marilla should observe her. After scurrying out of the house, she disappeared into the back garden and hastily buried the poor mouse.

Anne had every intention of confessing her misdemeanour to Marilla, but she fussed over just how to explain things simply to avoid raising Marilla’s ire. She made up several versions of the story in her head while she washed her hands under the pump in the sink.

“We’ve already tried sauce on our pudding, Marilla,” she cheerfully tried out her first version. “Perhaps it’s only fair the pigs should be allowed some on their feed tonight, don’t you think?”

Marilla stared at her as if she had ten heads. “Waste our precious pudding sauce on the pigs! Anne Shirley, have you taken leave of your senses?” Anne mustered up her courage. “I forgot to put the cheese cloth over it last night, Marilla. I was imagining I was a nun on my way to the altar to take the veil and. . .” Marilla was distracted by a knock on the door and didn’t hear a word of what Anne went on to say.

“Goodness gracious, I wonder who that could be at this hour,” she said, taking off her apron and hurrying to greet the visitor.

The surprise visitor turned out to be Miss Stacey. In the excitement of seeing her beloved teacher entering the front hall, Anne decided to leave the sad tale of the drowned mice and tainted sauce for a more appropriate confessional.

“I was just over at the Barrys’, Miss Cuthbert,” explained Miss Stacey, “and I thought I’d take this opportunity to stop by.”

Marilla’s raised her eyebrows, “What’s she been up to now, Miss Stacey? Don’t tell me this misunderstanding with the Barry family has made her neglect her studies.”

Miss Stacey smiled. “No, no; quite the contrary, Miss Cuthbert. Anne’s work has been simply excellent, which is why I’m here. I wondered whether you would permit her to join a special class? You see, I intend to give extra tutoring after school to those students who wish to take the entrance exams for Queen’s.”

Marilla’s concern gave way to genuine surprise. “The College in Charlottetown? Our Anne?”

“Your Anne is bright and energetic and very determined,” stated Miss Stacey, “I think she could pass as a teacher or even go on to the University.”

Marilla simply beamed. “Why, of course,” she said proudly “of course she can join the class if she wants to.” At that Marilla insisted Miss Stacey join them for supper.

The dinner table was a flurry of chatter and news about Anne and the Avonlea School. Even the normally reserved Matthew ventured into the conversation occasionally.

It wasn’t until Marilla left the table to offer Miss Stacey her special dessert that Anne turned pale. She entered immediately with the pudding in one hand and the pitcher of warm sauce in the other. Miss Stacey oohed and aahed at the sight of the rich sweet. Anne watched terrified as Marilla poured the sauce over Miss Stacey’s serving of steaming pudding. As Miss Stacey was about to put the fork to her lips Anne could no longer contain her secret. Just as Miss Stacey opened her mouth, Anne discovered her

voice and accosted Miss Stacey with a blood-curdling scream at the top of her lungs.



“DON’T EAT IT, MISS STACEY!”

Miss Stacey’s spoon crashed on her plate. Marilla fell back in her seat. “Anne Shirley, what is wrong with you,” she demanded, her face red with consternation. “A mouse drowned in the sauce, Marilla,” whimpered Anne, “I was working up courage to tell you, when Miss Stacey came in and told us all about studying for Queen’s and then I . . . Why Miss Stacey...” she paused, not quite believing the expressions on the grown-ups at that table. “Whatever is the matter?”

By now Miss Stacey had completely buried her face in her table napkin. Her shoulders shook up and down. Anne turned to Matthew for support. Tears filled his eyes in his desperation to refrain from laughing out loud. Marilla’s eyes were closed. Then suddenly Anne saw Marilla’s head thrown backwards as she burst into a guffaw. Anne stared at the laughing trio and said ingenuously, “I suppose in the end it was a romantic way to perish,” she decided, “...for a mouse.” At that, the Cuthberts and Miss Stacey lost all sense of decorum and burst into laughter at Anne’s expense.

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As the fresh snow and frost of December settled on Prince Edward Island, the small group of aspiring Queen’s scholars set to work under Miss Stacey’s expert tutelage. Anne relished her studies. When the regular day students had gone home, she liked nothing better than to move right up in front of Miss. Stacey’s desk, with the five or six remaining pupils. She

loved the quiet energy that the group displayed and welcomed the new ideas and challenges Miss Stacey's quick chalk described on the blackboard. Anne felt like she was part of something important during those evenings spent studying under the warm glow of the classroom lamplight. There was however sadness in her exhilaration because Mrs. Barry had refused to let Diana study for the entrance to Queen's, because of Anne.

"Mother says I should concentrate on learning to run a household instead of always having my nose stuck in a book." Diana had whispered to Anne while the day class prepared to leave one afternoon.

"Oh Diana," said Anne solemnly, "I feel as though you've tasted the bitterness of death."

She watched sadly as Diana departed with the others and then Anne sauntered home alone along the paths they had so often trod together. She felt a lump in her throat that was hard to swallow. She forced herself to delve into the pages of her Latin book, because not for worlds did Anne want Gilbert Blythe or Josie Pye or any other aspiring Queen's scholar to know what troubled her so.

Just before Christmas, a political meeting was organized in Charlottetown in honour of the Prime Minister's visit to the Island. Mrs. Rachel Lynde insisted on going, believing she alone needed to speak to the Prime Minister on behalf of the Avonlea constituents. She brought her husband, Thomas, who would tend to the horse. She also invited Marilla, who had a genuine interest in politics. Anne and Matthew were left to look after the house until she returned with the Lyndes the following day.

"What way do you vote, Matthew?" asked Anne that evening snuggling at his feet in front of the bright fire glowing in the grate. Matthew was nodding off while reading the Farmers' Advocate and Anne was supposed to be studying her geometry.

"Conservative," said Matthew, suddenly waking up as Anne tugged his leg and asked the question again.

"Then I'm Conservative, too," said Anne decidedly. "I'm glad because Gil—I mean some of the boys at school are Grits. Ruby Gillis says that when a man is courting he always has to agree with the girl's mother in religion

and her father in politics. Ruby Gillis knows all about courting because she has three older sisters. Did you ever go courting, Matthew?”

“Well now, no, I dunno’s I ever did,” said Matthew, who had put such an idea out of his head long ago.

“Never ever?” Matthew waved his hand at hand to stop. “Well why not, Matthew?”

“Well now, I couldn’t do it without talking to a girl.”

“What a terrible loss,” Anne shook her head sadly. “I’m sure there were many broken hearts on this Island as a result.”

Matthew smiled at his little girl but turned his attention back to his Farmers’ Advocate. For a while Anne just stared into the fire, thinking about what Matthew and Marilla must have been like in their youth. She eventually turned her attention back to her geometry.

Not a moment later, the pleasant stillness was broken by flying footsteps on the back veranda. The kitchen door literally flew open! Diana Barry ran into the parlour out of breath, a shawl wrapped hastily around her head.

“Oh Anne, do come quick,” she begged. “My little sister Minnie May is dreadful sick. She’s got croup, Mary Joe claims. Father and mother are away at that rally in Charlottetown and there’s nobody to go for the doctor.”

Matthew silently got up and found his fur hat and coat, He rushed past Diana and disappeared into the darkness outside.

“He’s gone to harness the mare to go to Carmody for the doctor,” said Anne, who pulled on her hooded coat. “We’re such kindred spirits I can read his thoughts.”

“I don’t believe he’ll find the doctor at Carmody,” sobbed Diana. “He’s probably at the rally too! Oh Anne, I’m so scared. Poor little Minnie May can’t breathe!”

Anne unlocked the medicine chest in the pantry. “Don’t forget that Mrs. Hammond had three sets of twins. When you’ve looked after as many babies as I have you learn how to remain calm in a crisis. Now don’t fret Diana. Ah, here it is! Ipecac! This medicine is an expectorant,” she added knowledgeably, revealing a blue bottle she had taken from the back of the cabinet. “It helps you cough up whatever’s blocking your breathing.” She

shoved the medicine into her pocket, then took Diana's hand. Together they hastened out into the darkness.



The night was clear and frosty; all ebony of shadow and silver of snowy slope as the girls scampered across the frozen fields. Big stars were shining over the silent fields. Here and there black pointed firs stood up with powdered snow blowing from their branches as the wind whistled through them. Although genuinely concerned about Diana's younger sister, Anne was bewitched by the night's mystery and loveliness. It was sweet to share such things with her closest friend again.

Minnie May was desperately ill. The sound of her congested gasps for air could be heard all over the house. Anne went to work with all the skill and promptness of a doctor.

"Mary Joe, put wood on the fire, I want it blazing! And water heated instantly!" she instructed the bewildered babysitter. "I don't want to hurt your feelings, but it seems to me you should have thought of it before, if you'd any imagination. Find some soft flannel cloths, Diana. I'm going to give Minnie May a good dose of Ipecac and a mustard plaster."

Minnie May did not take kindly to the Ipecac, but Anne had not brought up three sets of twins for nothing. Down that Ipecac went, not only once, but many times during the long, anxious night.

It was three o'clock when Matthew's sleigh arrived at the Barry homestead with the doctor. He had been obliged to go all the way to Spencervale to find a doctor. Thankfully, by the time they arrived, the grave need for

medical help had passed. Minnie May was much better and was finally sleeping soundly.

“I was awfully near giving up in despair,” Anne confided to the doctor who had tenderly placed a stethoscope on Minnie May’s chest. He nodded to Anne and Matthew that things sounded not too bad. “She got worse and worse until she was sicker than ever the Hammond twins were. I actually thought she was going to choke to death. I gave her every drop of Ipecac in that bottle. When the last dose went down, I had almost given up hope. But in about three minutes she coughed up the phlegm and began to get better right away. You can just imagine my relief, doctor. Some things cannot be expressed in words.”

“Yes, I understand,” smiled the doctor at Anne; as if he were thinking some things about her that couldn’t be expressed either. When Mrs. Barry returned, he was effusive in his praise for the miraculous medical achievements of Anne on that wintry night. “I tell you, that little redheaded girl saved your baby’s life. It would have been too late by the time I got there,” he said.

Mrs. Barry stroked Minnie May’s head tenderly her eyes full of tears. She looked up at her husband John. She knew she had been wrong about Anne. She wept from gratitude and expressed her heartfelt regret to everyone present.



Meanwhile, over the frosted blue landscape tinged with the rosy light of dawn Anne and Matthew hurried home in their sleigh.

“Isn’t it a wonderful morning, Matthew?” Anne yawned, as they sped across the crusty fields. “Doesn’t the whole world look like something God had just imagined for His own pleasure? I’m sorry I was ever cross with Mrs. Hammond for having twins. If she hadn’t, I mightn’t have known what to do for Minnie May. But oh, Matthew, I’m so exhausted right now, I can’t go to school. I just know I couldn’t keep my eyes open. But I hate to stay home. . . Gil—some of the others—will get ahead of me and. . . .”

Anne dozed off in mid-sentence. Matthew looked down ever so tenderly at the gentle little face snuggled under the blanket beside him. He gently put his arm around her and held her close. As he giddyupped the mare once he had turned onto the road again.

When Anne finally awoke and made her way down to the kitchen, the day was nearly finished its golden afternoon. Marilla, who was knitting, glanced up at her. Her eyes were twinkling in delight from hearing a certain bit of news. “Mrs. Barry’s been over here, begging to see you. But I wasn’t about to wake you. You’re invited over for dinner, Anne.” She tried to contain her smile, “I imagine humble pie is on the menu.”



"Doesn't the whole world look like something God had just imagined for His own pleasure?"

Anne rushed to the door. "Oh Marilla! Can I go right now?

Before I do my chores? I'm simply aching to see Diana!"

But, before she got an answer, Anne was already out the door and tearing through the orchard, her hair streaming behind her. Marilla indulged herself in a good, hard laugh at the thought of the turned tables that Anne would find at the Barry's now.

Mrs. Barry hugged and kissed Anne gratefully. She cried and apologized for ever doubting her word in the affair of the currant wine.

"I felt fearfully embarrassed, Marilla," Anne relayed when she arrived home after dark. "But I just assured her that I had never meant to intoxicate Diana, and that I was ready to cover the past with a mantle of oblivion. And Mrs. Barry put the very best china out just as if I was real company. I can't tell you what a thrill it gave me. Nobody ever used their very best china on my account before."

Even more exciting for Anne was the fact that Mrs. Barry also invited her to accompany them to the Christmas Ball at Carmody.

"She said they'd be honoured if I would stay overnight with Diana, too," Anne relayed to Matthew and Marilla who were enjoying a fire in the parlour. "It's going to be a very special occasion, and I'm to be their guest of honour."

Marilla's response was insensitive considering how joyful she had been when Mrs. Barry's apologized to Anne. "You can calm down because you're not going," she said without looking up from her knitting. "For a woman so firmly against currant wine, she's being strangely indulgent, I must say. I'm surprised she's allowing Diana to go. A ball is for adults, not children."

"But Marilla," Anne begged, "It's Christmas! And I'm to be the guest of honour. I'm invited to spend the night! In the spare room bed too! Think of the honour of your Anne being put in the spare-room bed!"

"Well, it's just an honour you'll have to forgo, eh?" replied Marilla.

Anne stood open-mouthed.

"You heard what I said, Anne. Now off to bed."

Anne looked at Matthew beseechingly. Matthew could barely look up he was so irritated by Marilla's unreasonable attitude. He sucked on his pipe, glared into the fire and fumed to himself.

"This is a wound I shall bear forever," sighed Anne theatrically as she shuffled off to bed.

When the door had closed behind her, Matthew turned on Marilla and spoke in a tone she had rarely heard him use before. "Well now, Marilla," he said. "I think you ought to let her go."

"Who's bringing this child up, you or me?" retorted Marilla. "That Mrs. Barry just wants to ease her conscience and I'm not going to allow it."

Matthew bit his pipe stem and drew a long puff.

"And no amount of huffing and puffing from you is going to change my mind," snapped Marilla, "You'd let her go to the moon if she had the notion. Well, I don't approve of balls. She'd just have her head filled up with nonsense."

Matthew grumbled. "Fact is, Marilla," he said determinedly, "you never went to a ball. Fact is this whole idea's got you scared to death."



Marilla put down her knitting and looked aghast at her normally self-effacing brother.

"That little girl oughta have all the kindness we can give her," Matthew pointed at Marilla with his pipe. "We got no call to raise her as cheerless as we was. Besides it's Christmas. And I just think you ought to let her go."

Marilla did not know how to even respond. Matthew got up and left the room. Marilla felt as if she had somehow wounded him. He had never spoken like that to her before.

Anne, grim and silent, was washing dishes the next day when Marilla came into the kitchen to fold laundry. “Very well,” she said quickly to Anne who was facing away from her. “You may go.”

Anne turned around, barely able to believe what Marilla had just articulated. She was so distracted she didn’t even notice the dripping dishcloth in her hand, “Oh Marilla, say those blessed words again!” she cried.

“I guess once is enough to say them,” said Marilla tartly. “This is Matthew’s doing and I wash my hands of it. If you catch pneumonia from sleeping in a strange bed or coming out of that overheated hall in the middle of the night, don’t blame me. Blame Matthew.”



“I dreamt last night that I arrived at the ball in puffed sleeves,” confessed Anne, “and everyone was overcome by my regal entrance.”

“Regal my eye!” sniffed Marilla. “You’re dripping greasy dishwater all over my nice clean floor, Anne Shirley. And if I have to listen to any more of this puffed-sleeve nonsense, I’ll just change my mind, that’s what I’ll do!”

Anne returned to the dishes without breathing another word. She feared even mentioning her other dream. Puffed sleeves!

.....

Matthew was horribly confused. He had deliberately chosen Samuel Lawson’s store, feeling sure that either Samuel or his son would wait on him. Once the door had closed behind him he was accosted by Samuel’s daughter Alice who was standing directly behind the counter. He stopped

dead in his tracks as she spoke to him. Alice was glamorous with big, brown eyes and a most bewildering smile. It was her bangle bracelets that jingled and rattled and completely threw Matthew off kilter.

“What can I do for you, Mr. Cuthbert?” enquired Alice as she tapped the counter with her bracelets.

“Well now. . . I’d . . . Uh . . .like . . . Uh . . . have you got any garden rakes?” murmured Matthew.

“We don’t usually carry rakes in December,” Alice replied with a look of confusion, “but I’ll go check upstairs. We may have one or two in storage.”

The moment she left, Matthew collected his senses and pondered how he might re-approach the problem.

“Anything else, Mr. Cuthbert?” enquired Alice, when she returned proudly carrying the very last rake in the store.

“Well now, since you suggest it, I . . . uh . . . that is . . . I . . . “

Matthew lowered his voice so he could barely be heard, but he was unable to express what he had really come for, “I may as well take some hayseed.”

Alice knew Matthew Cuthbert had been called odd, but at this, she decided he was completely insane. “We only keep hayseed in the spring,” she explained officiously, “We’ve none on hand just now.”

Matthew gathered his courage for his final attempt. “Well now, if it isn’t too much trouble I’d . . . uh . . . uh . . . I’d like to look at . . . uh . . . look at . . . some sugar, yes, some sugar.”

“White or brown?” asked Alice rolling her eyes. Matthew was actually perspiring now “Which would you suggest?” he asked in desperation.

“There’s a barrel of brown sugar over there,” said Alice, shaking her bangles in front of his nose. “It’s the only kind we have in stock.”

“I’ll . . . I’ll take 20 pounds of it. Yes, 20 pounds,” decided Matthew trying not to look at her. As Alice added up his bill, Matthew bit his lip. He looked back into the shop window and saw a pretty blue dress on a mannequin. He leaned over the counter in total fear, but he forced himself to speak. “I need a dress!” he muttered. Alice was beside herself. As he actually continued. “With puffed sleeves!” Matthew could barely form the words. “For Anne,”

he added quickly, seeing Alice's confused expression. She patted his hand knowingly. Her bangles tinkled delicately now.

"Land sakes, Mr. Cuthbert," she beamed with eyes glowing, "why didn't you just say so in the first place. Now you come over here with me to the window. I've got just the thing. Puffed sleeves, did you say?"

Anne stood staring at the dress, as if she couldn't move. She couldn't believe her eyes. It was a lovely robin egg blue with all the sheen of satin. The skirt was shirred with elegant frills and the waist was pin-tucked ever so fashionably. There were wonderful ruffles around the neck, but the sleeves were the crowning glory! They had long blue silk elbow cuffs, and above them were—two beautiful puffs protruding like mutton chops! Anne was speechless. She could hardly believe it was really hers.

Quickly she slipped it on and ran downstairs. Marilla stood at the kitchen table wondering what in heavens ever possessed Matthew to buy the enormous bag of raw sugar. She had no use at all for such supplies. At the sight of the dress it became crystal clear what he'd been up to.

"Marilla, just look at these puffs!" Anne twirled around and around as she danced into the kitchen.

Initially Marilla was furious. "They're ridiculous. You'll have to turn sideways to get through the doors!"

Still, she was aware of how attractive and refined Anne looked in the stylish gown. Then Anne was off like a will-of-the-wisp before Marilla could take it all in. Poor Marilla could only shake her head. "Twenty pounds of brown sugar", she said to herself.

Anne found Matthew in the barn. She saw him in silhouette through the steam coming off the hay in the wintry sunlight. Anne entered timidly. For once she felt at a loss for words. She barely knew how to thank him.

Matthew looked up from his grain sack as she came in. He smiled broadly with tenderness and pride as Anne walked towards him. "Well now, I guess I shoulda waited till Christmas, but I thought you might want to wear it to the ball. Why. . . why. . . don't you like it?" he asked, suddenly concerned. Anne could not control her emotions. She was crying.

"Like it? Oh, Matthew!" Anne threw her arms around this beloved man. "It's more exquisite than any dress I could ever imagine."

Matthew smiled at seeing the grandeur of those puffs!

“Puffed sleeves,” he noted, in the manner of a connoisseur.

“The puffiest in the world,” Anne hugged him with all her might. “You are a man of impeccable taste, Matthew.”

Shyly, Matthew leaned his head against Anne’s and kissed her. “Mustn’t get your dress dirty,” he said awkwardly. For a second Anne decided she didn’t even care about the dress. She did not want to let him go. She had never felt such love for anyone in her entire life as she now felt for Matthew.



"You are a man of impeccable taste, Matthew"

.....



"Such a romantic gesture would be utterly beyond his imagination"

The night of the ball was a fairytale dream for Anne. The Avonlea hall smelled of pine and cedar boughs. The candles lent a magical glow to everything and the Christmas decorations seemed beautiful beyond any description Anne could muster. The girls in a state of rapture descended the stairs into the main ballroom. Holding tightly to their dance cards, Anne imagined she and Diana were regal ladies entering the court of knights and kings. The two girls had watched in amazement as many of the townsfolk whirled around the room to the exquisite sounds of a string quartet that had been hired from Charlottetown.

Anne was conscious that not a single girl in the room had puffs the size of hers meanwhile Diana felt a twinge of jealousy at the sight of Alice Bell's new hair style.

"I think she looks ridiculous," she declared to Anne. "She's only seventeen and she's put her hair up already. I'm going to wait till I'm eighteen."

But Anne's attention had drifted elsewhere. She glimpsed Gilbert Blythe whirling across the floor with Josie Pye. Anne turned away so they wouldn't see her and her proud puffed sleeves seemed to deflate slightly as she tried to look askance.

"It's too bad you've been so awful to him," said Diana, catching Anne in her game of pretence. "He might have asked you to dance."

Anne's face flushed. She tossed her head and assured Diana she didn't give a hoot whether she ever danced with Gilbert Blythe. It was just as well that she didn't, because Gilbert purposely ignored Anne all night. He thought it

was time to give her a taste of her own medicine. So Anne and Diana enjoyed dancing with each other instead, and the evening passed by in a whirl of giddiness and fun.

Secretly, Gilbert found the ball a bit of a strain trying to pretend he was really having a good time with Josie. Josie wasn't nearly as interesting as Anne and she was constantly pulling him away to chat about nothing in particular. When Gilbert finally got away from Josie and quietly stood under the ballroom loft in the corner, he caught sight of Anne's dance card, lying abandoned near a punch bowl. Picking it up, he folded it and slipped it into his breast pocket.



It was past midnight when the girls returned to the Barry farmhouse with Diana's parents. Mr. and Mrs. Barry went straight to bed. The guest parlour, which opened into the spare room, was kept up for guests. The cozy room

was dimly lit now as the fire in the grate was almost extinguished. Anne and Diana tiptoed in and changed into their night-clothes by its dying glow.

“I bet Gilbert took your dance card and that’s why you couldn’t find it!” Diana giggled, as she began dancing around the shadowy room.

“Such a romantic gesture would be utterly beyond his imagination,” replied Anne giddily. Secretly the thought had actually occurred to her, too.

“Well who then? Josie Pye?” persisted Diana.

Anne had no intention of discussing the dangerous topic of Gilbert any further. “How about I race you to bed? I’ll just bet I get to jump in first!” she suggested brightly. “On your marks, get set, GO!”

Two girls in white flew across the room, bolting through the spare room door, and bounding onto the bed together. Suddenly they felt something move under the giant cover. With a heave and a gasp an old voice squawked from under the pillows, “Merciful goodness! “

Anne and Diana had no recollection of how they jumped from that bed and ran out of the room. But run away they did until they found themselves a quiet hiding place at the top of the stairs, where they could both catch their breath.

“Who was it? Or rather what was it?” whispered Anne in terror.

“Aunt Josephine,” gasped Diana. “We weren’t expecting her until tomorrow. I know she’s going to be absolutely furious about this, and. . . Oh dear!” Diana’s giggles stopped abruptly. “I suppose I shall have to forget all about my music lessons from here on in.”

“What music lessons?” shivered Anne.

“I’ve always wanted to learn to play the piano and Aunt Josephine promised I she’d pay for an instructor. She’s the only one in our family who’s rich enough to afford it.”

“It was my fault, Diana. I won’t have you lose your piano lessons because of me.” It seemed to Anne that Diana had been deprived enough of certain advantages by her mother and she was determined to improve Diana’s prospects. “I’ll just have to have a talk with your Aunt Josephine in the morning.”

“Anne Shirley, you’d never! Why, she’ll eat you alive!” protested Diana. “She’s awfully prim and proper. Now hush!” she whispered, holding her finger to her lips as they entered the room Diana shared with Minnie May. “You’re just going to have to sleep with my little sister tonight. But don’t move a muscle—because she kicks like a mule.”

Anne stood wringing her hands outside the guest parlour. She couldn’t decide how she was going to approach Aunt Josephine who was writing a letter at her desk in the adjoining room. Anne found her courage and knocked on the door frame. Her timid rapping was met with a caustic “Come in”. Anne took a deep breath and entered to find herself standing before a gorgon of a woman with a great mass of frightening grey hair framing a tiny face. She stood up and appeared to look down her nose at Anne from across the room. She scanned Anne from head to toe.

“What’s this?” she grumbled. “Come to finish the job have you?”

Whatever little courage Anne had mustered, drained away.

“I’m sorry I startled you, ma’am,” she whispered.

“Who are you?” she demanded shrewdly.



“Anne of Green Gables,” Anne replied nervously, “and I’ve come to confess.”

“I am not interested,” she pronounced haughtily “in the confessions of assassins who masquerade as little girls.”

“It was all my fault about jumping into bed on you, Miss Barry. I suggested it. Diana would never have thought of such a thing. Diana is far too lady-like. So I think you ought to forgive her and let her have her music lessons back. Diana’s heart is set on music lessons, and I know too well what it is to set your heart on a thing and not get it. If you must be cross with someone, be cross with me. I’ve been so used in my early days to having people cross at me that I can endure it much better than Diana can.”

Much of the snap had gone out of the old lady's eyes by this time. It was replaced by a hint of amusement. However she managed to maintain her tone of severity.

"Do you know what it is to be awakened out of a sound sleep, after a long and tiring journey, by two great girls galloping into one's room to bounce down on top of you?"

"I don't know, but I can imagine," said Anne eagerly. "I'm sure it must have been terrifying in the extreme. But then there is our side of it too." She stopped suddenly. "Have you any imagination, Miss Barry?"



"I dare say your claim to sympathy is just as valid as mine, child.

It all depends on how each of us looks at it"

"Imagination at my age is a threat to life," Miss Barry replied ironically.

"Well, if you did have imagination," Anne prattled on, "you'd be able to put yourself in our place. We didn't know there was anyone in that bed and you nearly scared us to death. And then we couldn't sleep in the spare room after being promised. I suppose you're used to sleeping in spare rooms. But just imagine what you would feel like if you were an orphan girl who'd never had such an honour. Mine was the sleep of the bitterly disappointed, Miss Barry. And to make matters worse, I was forced to lie awake all night with the knowledge that I had cost Diana her career as a world famous concert pianist."

By now Miss Barry was unable to contain her laughter.

"I dare say your claim to sympathy is just as valid as mine, child. It all depends on how each of us looks at it."

"Then you'll forgive Diana?"

Miss Barry ruminated. "Very well; I will re-instate Diana's music lessons in exchange for your. . . "She took Anne's hand in hers, "coming up to Charlottetown to visit me on occasion."

"Me, Miss Barry?"

"Yes, you, Anne of Green Gables. Diana can come along as well. You amuse me child. And precious little amuses me at my age. Will you come?"

Anne was ecstatic.

"Then go tell Diana she can be a concert pianist after all" Anne found Diana hiding outside the door, where she had taken in every word.

"You wouldn't think so to look at her," Anne whispered in delight, "but your Aunt Josephine is definitely a kindred spirit! Isn't it splendid, Diana, kindred spirits aren't nearly so scarce as I used to believe they were!"

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The harsh maritime winter gave way to a breathtaking spring in Avonlea with fresh, chilly days heralding the lush growth of plants and flowers across the Island.

Anne had begun to sprout up too, so rapidly that Marilla was beside herself at having to let down the hems of her skirts more than once. "Why Anne, how you do grow!" she mused one day in June, as she was measuring Anne for a brand new dress she had decided Anne needed. Marilla had come to the conclusion that it was acceptable to spoil the girl once in awhile. Marilla felt a bittersweet pang in her heart, as she became aware of Anne growing up—while she and Matthew were growing older. The young sprite who she loved more than anything had been replaced by a slim, serious young lady who had just turned fifteen. While Marilla knew she as attached to the girl as she had been to the child she was nevertheless saddened by the loss of the innocent child that had come into their lives by mistake.

"You've only a few more days before the Entrance Examinations for Queen's," she queried. "Do you think you'll be able to get through?"

Anne was afraid of speaking the thoughts that frightened her the most, but, for Marilla's sake, spoke.

"I don't know. Sometimes I think I'll be all right and sometimes I get horribly afraid. I wish it was all over, Marilla. It haunts me. Sometimes I wake up in the night and wonder what I'll do if I don't pass."

“Why, go to school next year and try again,” said Marilla breezily.

“I wouldn’t have the heart for it. It would be such a disgrace to fail, especially if Gil—if the others passed.”

A few days after this soulful revelation, Anne found herself in the examination hall in Charlottetown, watching the examination papers being handed out by an officious tutorial assistant. She was afraid she was going to succumb to anxieties that frequently kept her awake at night—as if her very life depended on the outcome of these exams. To become a teacher she desperately needed to be admitted to Queen’s. She couldn’t let Matthew and Marilla down. She also knew that success would mean nothing if she fell behind Gilbert Blythe. Anne wanted to walk out of that examination room that very minute that she saw Gilbert’s focused expression as he threw himself into the exam. But, Anne the rival, pushed the ridiculous thought out of her mind, took a deep breath and knuckled down to work. The old anger she had cherished against him for so long had been replaced by a deep-rooted sense of determination to not let him get ahead of her. It was this feeling that pushed Anne forward harder than ever during the week of examinations. When she and Gilbert passed each other on the streets of Charlottetown more than once, neither of them would offer the other any sign of recognition. Anne managed to hold her head a little higher each time they glimpsed each other. The silly ritual couldn’t help but make her wish she might have actually made friends with Gilbert.



When the very last exam was done and handed in scores of students found themselves rushing out of the gloomy examination hall into the bright summer sunlight. Anne paused on the wide sandstone steps; her relief all

mixed up with a real sense of regret. Miss Stacey quietly took her arm from behind her. She let Anne know that she would be unable to return to the little Avonlea school for personal reasons, "I'm going to miss you tremendously, Miss Stacey," Anne said with tears in her eyes, "I feel you've given us all so much."

Miss Stacey smiled warmly. "I want to wish you all the luck in the world, Anne Shirley. If anyone deserves to be successful, it's you. I'll be watching out for you, even from Halifax."

"That's so far— is anything wrong?" wondered Anne.

Miss Stacey's usually happy eyes clouded for a brief second "I have my own set of troubles," she admitted, "My mother is very ill, very ill indeed. But remember, Anne..." the smile was back, "true friends are always together in spirit."

Below them, over on the green quadrangle she noticed Gilbert waiting to say his goodbyes too. Miss Stacey had proven to be a wise and inspiring force for him too.

Miss Stacey looked at Anne. "I want to remind you of something we once agreed upon together, Anne Shirley," she said. "Tomorrow is always fresh with no mistakes in it." Taking Anne in her arms, she hugged her strongly. In a flash she had moved away. Anne had a lump in her throat as she watched her stride across the lawn to shake hands with Gilbert.

Anne considered whether it might have been more rewarding if she and Gilbert could have said their goodbyes to Miss Stacey together.

The exam results were at least two weeks away from being published in the newspaper, for the entire world to see. At first Anne found the suspense unbearable. Summer was breathtaking that year and within a couple of days the thought of exams and high marks seemed a lot less important than rowing on Barry's pond with Diana or picking blueberries along Lover's Lane in the shade of the birch trees.



Anne and Diana enjoyed nearly living outdoors, spending most of their time in their secret woodlands and glens and dreaming to their hearts' content. Occasionally they even went trout fishing from the bridge at the end of Barry's Pond. Even more often the two girls would row themselves about the pond, reading to each other, in the little flat-bottomed dory that belonging to Diana's father

One sultry day, Ruby Gillis and Jane Andrews came over to while away a lazy afternoon. Anne suddenly felt inspired to perform the sad story of Lord Tennyson's "Elaine, The Lily Maid". Anne's mother had been a schoolteacher who had taught her to read at a very young age. She had died young and Anne could barely remember her, except how much she had loved Tennyson's poetry. Anne maintained that passion for romantic poetry and especially for everything that Tennyson had written about the legend of King Arthur. As she grew older she was consumed by the secret regret that she had not been born in medieval times. Those olden days of Camelot, Merlin and Arthur, Guinevere and Lancelot all sounded so much more romantic than the present. Now, here in front of her stood an ensemble of players that could bring her imagined world to life.

Of course, the other girls were all too familiar with Lancelot and Elaine, as they had all enjoyed learning the poem under Miss Stacey's tutelage that spring. They all thought Anne's proposal of a play would be a wonderful lark. They assembled all of the required props that Anne recommended, and then each of them lined up beside the flat-bottomed dory, bickering over who should actually perform the role of the tragic heroine who would sail down the river to Camelot in a funeral barge.

“Ruby, you have to be Elaine, because you’re so fair,” ordered Anne.

“I couldn’t lie there and pretend I was dead,” complained Ruby, “I’d die of fright!”

“Why don’t you be Elaine, Anne. It’s your brilliant idea!” stated Diana, “And your complexion’s just as fair as Ruby’s. Besides your hair’s much darker than plain old red now.”



“Do you really think so?” inquired Anne, secretly enjoying the compliment.

“It’s most definitely auburn,” chimed in Jane persuasively, “and that’s awfully close to blonde.”

“Oh fine then.” Anne stepped into the rickety dory, draped with Mrs. Barry’s old black shawl, like a queen. “That shawl looks passably like the ‘blackest samite’, mentioned in the poem Diana,” whispered Anne as she lay down and covered herself.

“Mother would never have imagined it could be used as ‘royal’ silk! She left it in her rag bin.” Diana helped Anne spread her hair around her shoulders onto an old afghan pillow, as Anne closed her eyes.

“She does look really dead, doesn’t she?” Ruby Gillis whispered to Jane. “It makes me kind of nervous. Do you think it’s really all right to be acting out death and funerals like this? Mrs. Lynde says that all theatre acting is a sin.” Replied Jane.

“You’re spoiling the effect, Ruby,” Anne opened a single eye and glared at them. “This is hundreds of years before Mrs. Lynde was born. Girls help Diana arrange the rest. It’s ridiculous for Elaine to be talking when she’s dead.”

Under Diana’s able management the girls all pitched in and draped an old yellow piano scarf on top of Anne, who simply relished playing the noble corpse. The piano cover wasn’t exactly cloth of gold, as the poem suggested, the shimmering effect that was created in the sunlight made a spectacular alternative. In Elaine’s left Jane placed her letter to Lancelot; in

her right, Diana anchored a delicate bouquet of freshly picked wildflowers with an orange lily. Anne lay still, but couldn't resist asking for the single white lily described in the poem. Diana hushed her again, warning her that she would just have to rely on her imagination, as perfect white lilies were positively nowhere to be found on Orchard Slope.

One by one these 'ladies-in-waiting' sadly 'kissed her quiet brow,' according to Tennyson's elegiac directions. "Farewell for ever, sweet sister," they murmured to themselves sorrowfully. Then the three of them solemnly pushed the barge away from the landing place. They paused at the bank of the pond just long enough to see it sail off into the current caused by the ocean tide. Laughing and carrying on in a most capricious manner they hurried up into the woods above the Slope and down the road to the lower headland. Here they lay in the tall grass and prepared to await Elaine's royal barge come round the corner to fair Camelot.

As Mr. Barry's dory drifted along downstream, Anne also delighted in the romance of the setting to the full. The summer sun caressed her face. The sound of sandpipers, chickadees and bumblebees echoed in the air. Anne dreamed about each line of the poem in her mind. Eventually she began to sing the familiar verses to herself:

"In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter - all her bright hair streaming down.
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold. . .
She did not seem as dead
But fast asleep, and lay as tho' she smiled. . ."

From somewhere in the background of the gentle mists of the saga, another sound began to infiltrate Anne's song. It bubbled and sloshed and Anne began to feel damp and uncomfortable. Anne awoke, startled out of her mind! The dory was flooding! She glanced down at the bottom of her funeral barge and was confronted with a gaping hole around which the gurgling puddle was growing ever deeper. It lapped at her slippers and the piano scarf. Mrs. Barry's 'blackest samite' was completely submerged. Anne was confronted with the fact that her barge was very likely to sink before it reached the lower headland, let alone Camelot.



"In her right hand the lily, in her left, the letter – all her bright hair streaming down"



She was hysterical as she looked around for the oars. Unfortunately they had been left behind at the landing. The current was beginning to pick up as well. As Anne desperately scanned the horizon, she saw, ahead, Barry's Bridge like an oasis of safety. "Oh dear God," she implored Her Maker, "please take the boat close to one of the pilings and I'll do the rest." The supporting pilings were old tree trunks from which protruded stubs from cut off branches. If only she could get close enough to just the right stub she felt confident she could climb onto it. Anne endured a few more horrifying moments as the boat—now starting to submerge, banged against a piling. Her prayers had been answered and she managed to leap and firmly catch her foot on a knot. She embraced the thick piling as best she could and hung on for dear life.

Her terror was heightened as she watched the old boat, now relieved of its weight, drift past the bridge and sink down into the oily depths out in midstream. Ruby, Jane, and Diana, waiting for the dory from the lower headland, caught a glimpse of it disappearing and they all jumped

immediately to the conclusion that Anne had sunk right along with it. For a good two minutes all three girls stood immobilized, the blood drained from their faces. Then Ruby burst into a blood-curdling scream and began running frantically up the embankment and back through the woods. Jane and Diana followed suit and joined Ruby in a terrified wail for help.

The piling was as slippery as it was lumpy. Anne became tired and cold as she struggled to hold on without sliding off. Each minute seemed like an hour to the now sopping- wet Lily Maid. She couldn't understand why none of the girls had found her. She began to worry something horrible had happened to one of them. Ruby was so clumsy— suppose she had fallen in a rabbit hole and broken her leg; or perhaps one of them had gotten caught in the woods in one of Mr. Barry's fox traps. Where were those foolish girls? Anne became frightened that her cramped hands simply couldn't hold on any longer. Should she try to swim along the bridge, she began to wonder, but was terrified because she was such a poor swimmer that she would never make it. Staring into the wavering, inky-green shadows below her, she began to shiver uncontrollably. Her imagination started to conjure up all kinds of ghastly possibilities.

As her hands slipped and she began to think she just couldn't endure the aching in her arms and wrists any longer, along rowed Gilbert Blythe right under the bridge in Harmon Andrews' borrowed dory.



Gilbert was absolutely taken aback at the pale frightened face staring across at him. “Anne Shirley! What in heck are you doing?” he called, with a big smile on his face.

Anne's pride got the better of her; “Fishing for lake trout,” was her retort.

Without any further banter, Gilbert simply took her by the arms and helped her into the dory. He stared at Anne searchingly and she blurted out the truth behind her circumstances.

“We were performing Tennyson’s Elaine,” Anne finally began to confess, so mortified she could barely describe the chain of events in detail, nor look directly at the real ‘knight in shining armour’ sitting before her. “I was merely trying to use the barge ... I mean the dory...to show the other girls how she drifted down to Camelot... according to poem. It was merely... educational. That blessed dory sprang a leak and I had the good fortune to be able to climb onto the piling or I would have sunk for certain. Now please be good enough to row me ashore.”

Gilbert kept on rowing straight to the landing without even uttering a comment. He had a hard time containing his laughter over Anne’s tribulations, but he knew better than to speak. The prospect of a friendship with Anne was very much at stake and he was hopeful that here was an opportunity to urge Anne to reconsider things. As they reached the shore though Anne could hardly wait to leap from the boat. She flatly refused any assistance Gilbert tried to offer. She actually tried to run away.

Gilbert cut her to the quick. He would suffer no more of her indignation. He jumped right behind her and laid a hand on her arm to stop her. “Wait a minute, Anne!” he said anxiously, “Don’t just run off! I’ve just come from the Post Office to see if the exam results had been published and. . . You need to know something.”

Anne cut him off sharply. “Well, congratulations to you on coming first, Mr. Blythe!” she said with a petulant toss of her dripping hair. “I’m sure you’re all too proud of your achievement.”

Gilbert was completely flummoxed. “We tied for first place, you ninny. You and I.” He looked at his feet for a brief second. “I figured you’d have got first for sure.”

Anne was, in a word, thunderstruck. She was having difficulty processing what this handsome boy was endeavoring to explain to her. “What? You mean first out of all two hundred?”

Gilbert smiled ruefully. “I’m really sorry you have to share it with me. You deserve to be first. I know how hard you worked.”

“I never expected to beat you,” replied Anne honestly. Besides how would he ever have known how hard she had worked? Anne was feeling completely dizzy.

For a moment the two just stared awkwardly at each other. Gilbert broke the silence first.

“Can’t we be friends, Anne?” he said slowly. Underneath her disheveled dignity Anne was now truly aware that this half-shy, half-eager young man was someone who perhaps she could actually make friends with. “I’m sorry I ever said anything about your hair. It was so long ago. Aren’t you ever going to forgive me?”

It was completely the wrong comment for Gilbert to have made at that delicate juncture. That horrible scene of two years before was suddenly replayed in Anne’s mind. Gilbert’s teasing voice and his taunts of “Carrots!” rang in her ears again. If Gilbert Blythe thinks he can embarrass me into a friendship Anne thought to herself. Well she would have none of it. Her softened expression suddenly turned frosty. “If I recall Mr. Blythe, you hurt my feelings excruciatingly,” she stammered, trying to sound as hurt and as arrogant as she could.

“I only said it because I wanted to meet you so much,” Gilbert confessed. “Look, c’mon Anne...why can’t we be friends?”

Anne had turned and was running off. She had to get away. She was frightened of her mixed feelings about Gilbert. “Why can’t you figure it out, if you’re so clever, Gilbert Blythe?” she threw his words back at him as she scampered up the hill.

Anne tried desperately to hold her head up high, but she was also painfully aware of feelings of regret. Perhaps she was being too intolerant of poor Gilbert. He did seem sincere at first, she worried. She shouldn’t have been so flip. Why couldn’t she have been clever enough to find a different way of answering? Yes, he had hurt her feelings once, but still... some might think her behaviour intolerable too. Anne’s knees were wobbly as she reached the hill overlooking the headland. She thought it would be a great relief to sit down and have a good cry. She found she actually shaking, what with having been forced to cling to the pilings in the cold for so long.

But Anne had to quickly dispel these feelings because running straight towards her were Jane and Diana rushing back from finding help at Green Gables and in a state of apoplexy. Behind them hurried Matthew, and in the distance Anne espied Marilla, followed by a struggling but determined

Mrs. Rachel. They were all frightened out of their wits by the panicked girls' report.

"Oh Anne," gasped Diana, nearly collapsing on top of Anne. Jane was sobbing out of relief and joy, "Oh, Anne...we thought...you were...drowned...and we felt like murderers...because we had made...you be...Elaine. And Ruby is in hysterics...she can't be moved... and Oh, Anne, how did you ever save yourself from drowning!"



"I climbed up onto one of the pilings," described Anne exhaustedly," and then Gilbert Blythe came along and rowed me to shore."

"Oh, how romantic, Anne!" sighed Jane through her tears. "Of course you'll speak to him from now on won't you?"

"Of course I will not!" Anne's sensitivity on the subject was evident. Jane and Diana were both surprised and looked at each other, wondering what exactly had gone on between Anne and Gilbert this time, "And I don't ever want to hear the word 'romance' again, Jane Andrews! It was easy enough to be romantic in days of Camelot, but its relevance is completely lost in today's sorry world."

At that moment, Marilla caught up to the little group. When Diana had run towards her sobbing that Anne had drowned, Marilla had felt an indescribable stab of fear. That was when she knew, unequivocally, how much Anne meant to her. She took the sopping girl in her arms and held her to her breast.

"When are you ever going to learn some sense, girl?" was all she could murmur upon finally holding Anne.

Anne beamed at her, feeling safe in a way she had never experienced. “I think my prospects are brightening,” she confessed in elation. “I just heard the results from Queen’s. Gilbert Blythe and I tied for first place.”

Everybody talked all over each other. This piece of news was more overwhelming than the fear of losing Anne. Matthew was aglow with pride and looked on quietly. “I must say you’ve done pretty well for yourself, Anne,” cut in Marilla finally, trying to cover up her relief and Mrs. Rachel’s absolute shock at the announcement. Mrs. Rachel, who despite her critical eye was a good-hearted soul spoke up jovially.



“I guess she has done well, Marilla,” she burst out. “Far be it from me to be backward when praise is due. You’re a credit to us all, Anne Shirley, and we’re all proud of you!”

Anne gazed at the array of smiling faces and realized she was surrounded by people she had come to love and who cared desperately about her. “I’m simply dazzled inside,” she disclosed, “I want to say a hundred things, but I can’t find the words.”

The group laughed heartily at the very thought of Anne Shirley at a loss for words, and then everyone escorted Anne back across the fields to Green Gables.

Then unexpectedly the long summer days of June and July just slipped through Anne’s fingers. Before she knew it, August had passed as well and there she stood on the verge of September as the first signs of red and yellow began to appear in the foliage around the farm.

It was unsettling to think about not returning to the safety of the Avonlea School and the prospect of leaving for Queen's made her immediately homesick. One morning she awoke and realized she was going to become a teacher. It was a daunting thought. She was reminded about her mother and felt proud of her career choice. Thoughts of her mother however were becoming distant and vague in comparison to painful prospect of leaving Matthew and Marilla.

As the train pulled into the little Bright River station, that place of limbo from Anne's earlier life, Matthew unexpectedly reached for Anne's bag. Anne tried to stop him. "It's alright. Let me take it, Matthew," she said, "It'll be easier if I go quickly by myself."

Marilla's eyes were uncharacteristically full of tears. "Humph," she remarked, "there's no need to get all emotional over nothing." Anne was unable to contain herself.

She dropped her bag. "Nothing!" she suddenly found herself in tears. "Why you and Matthew mean everything to me." Reaching for Marilla, she leaned against her and kissed Marilla's weathered cheek.

Marilla fought to contain herself. "All this foolishness," she said embarrassedly and nodded at Matthew, "You may as well kiss him, too."

Anne kissed Matthew tenderly, then realized she had to leave quickly as the stationmaster called, "All aboard!" She hurried away and climbed quickly into her car.

A shadow fell over Marilla's face. "I'm afraid for her, Matthew." Her eyes were full of tears by now, as the train began chugging away and the platform filled with steam. "She'll be gone so long. She'll get terrible lonesome."

"You mean we'll get terrible lonesome," Matthew answered, taking his sister's. Marilla leaned against him for the first time she could ever remember. He blinked his moist eyes. "Well now..." he continued, "that Mrs. Spencer, sure made a lucky mistake, all them years ago."

"That wasn't luck Matthew. It was Providence," Marilla stated definitively. She looked into his eyes. "He knew we needed her." They both caught sight of the young woman in the straw boater leaning out the window, looking back longingly at the old couple still standing on the platform watching her. They all waved and then she was gone.



"That wasn't luck, Matthew. It was providence. He knew we needed her"

Anne's train finally pulled into the grand Charlottetown station just in time for her to hurry off to the university and attend the opening of the Academy. The pain of leaving home was forgotten for a time as Anne rushed about meeting all kinds of other new students and professors and trying to remember everyone's names. The frenzied first several days of her new life sped past like a whirligig until classes became organized.

Miss Stacey's entire class had been successful at passing the entrance examination to the teacher's college. All of them had decided on the option of taking the regular courses. This would mean spending two years of study to obtain a graduate teaching certificate. However Anne and Gilbert, both following Miss Stacey's strategic advice, chose to study for a First Class teacher's license that could be earned in a single year and carried with it additional professional privileges.



"I just heard the results from Queen's. Gilbert Blythe and I tied for first place"

After a week Anne became quite conscious of the loneliness that began to re-emerge. But, the feelings of isolation that resulted from being in a classroom of fifty strangers was slightly lessened by the fact that two rows away from her sat a familiar tall, curly-haired chap. It was quite reassuring to know that she could rely on the old rivalry to keep things lively. Anne considered she would hardly have endured school without it. Gilbert too felt much the same way—although neither of them dared exhibit the gladness they felt.

Anne found herself staring after him one day as he brushed by—without so much as even looking down at her. “I suppose he’s making up his mind here and now to win the gold medal at the end of the year. What a splendid chin he has! I’m surprised I never noticed it before.”

Anne realized that most of the other girls were fortunate enough to have relatives or family friends in town, whom they could live with. Diana’s Aunt Josephine had offered to take Anne in, but her house was so distant from Queen’s that Anne realized it would be impractical. She was ever so grateful when Miss Barry tracked down a boarding house that was situated perfectly next to the building where most of her classes were scheduled. The old lady was happy to write to Matthew and Marilla to assure them that this was the very place for Anne and she was only too happy to invite Anne to her splendid mansion for tea and supper from time to time. Anne cherished her friendship.

One evening though, looking up from piles of studies she looked about her narrow little cranny, with its empty bookcase and blank walls, Anne suddenly found herself dreaming about her own tiny room at Green Gables. She felt crestfallen as she wondered about whether Matthew and Marilla were sitting at the table in the kitchen, or whether the light from Diana’s window might be blinking through the gaps in the spruce trees across the fields.

Worse than that, Anne found herself thinking nostalgic thoughts of Gilbert and of the friendship she had so foolishly bungled. She even admitted to herself that it would be very pleasant to have such a friend as Gilbert to jest and chatter with and with whom she could exchange ideas about books, studies—even ambitions. So she decided, fool that she had been, to compose a letter. In it she apologized with enormous regret for allowing her stubborn pride to deteriorate into rudeness towards him. She asked

politely whether he would forgive her and whether they might try to renew the friendship Gilbert had so kindly offered that day last summer, in Mr. Andrews' dory.

Still feeling courageous the next day Anne forced herself to seek out Gilbert in the study hall at Queen's. He was nowhere to be found and Anne's daring began to weaken. She decided the easiest course would be to leave the letter for him in the men's residence. She found the Hall Porter in Gilbert's building sitting at his desk and she asked if he would do her the favour of making sure that Mr. Blythe received the personal note. Instead of simply accepting the envelope from her, the Porter motioned Anne into the sitting room, where, he said she could simply find Mr. Blythe in person.

Anne was nervous but feeling she could not just walk away she proceeded into the sitting room with her heart thumping in her throat uncontrollably. Anne stopped in her tracks. There—his back towards her—

sat Gilbert all right. He was studying—or rather— gazing admiringly, Anne thought, at a fetching young lady who was deeply engrossed in a mutual mathematics problem. From this girl's distinctive contour, Anne decided she was capable of reading volumes. The fact that she was highly intelligent was unmistakable. Anne was also certain she overheard her quip that she had every intention of walking off with the Avery scholarship.

“Can't you just picture it, Gilbert?” she tittered. “Emily Clay, winner of the Avery!”



Anne stepped back and stood still in the doorway for an instant contemplating her options. One of them was to go over and smack Emily Clay across the head with her wide open mathematics book. Anne quickly determined that such courses of action rarely resulted in a solution to a

person's problem. Without much ado she chose option two which was to run down the hall and flee. She tore up the letter as she went.



Anne found herself caught again between tears and fury as she hurried down the walkway. This time the anger was directed mainly at herself for foolishly reconsidering Gilbert. The Avery scholarship was the most celebrated scholarship in all of Eastern Canada; two hundred and fifty dollars a year for four years at Redmond College. It would not only mean a superb university degree, but it would relieve Matthew and Marilla of the burden of paying for her education. And after all, it was an award for distinction in English, a field that Anne regarded as completely her own. If this Emily Clay thought she was going to ever take that award well she had never competed against Anne Shirley from Avonlea. Anne immediately set her sights on that scholarship. She began to take great pleasure in working as hard as she could to outshine Miss Clay or any other bright young thing that Gilbert dared to pay attention to. They would have to reckon with Miss Anne Shirley in due course.



Once she settled on her goals and began to work hard, Anne's initial pining for home began to wear off quickly. In time she wrote long, descriptive letters to Marilla and Matthew. During the early winter she even managed

to make several weekend visits home, which were relished by all three. Eventually Anne cultivated a solid circle of Queen's friends around her to whom she devoted a good deal of time. But after the Christmas holidays, she threw herself into her work with even more than her customary enthusiasm and concentration. She toiled so diligently that by spring, when the examination results were due out, she barely had enough energy left to care about the outcome. Even so she found herself on her way to the bulletin board with Jane Andrews to read the results as soon as they were posted.



“You’ll simply have to read the announcements for me. I’ll wait here until you come and tell me, Jane,” Anne said decidedly. “And please just do it as quickly as possible. I know I’ve probably failed, so just say so straight out, without trying to break it gently. And whatever you do, don’t sympathize with me. Promise me please?”

Jane was unable to understand the depth of Anne’s anxiety and insecurity but she promised for the sake of their long friendship to oblige Anne all the same. Her promise was interrupted by the loud cheers of a group of students pouring out the doors and down from the stairs of the hall where the results were posted. Lo and behold, Jane and Anne looked at each other, for the group was carrying Gilbert Blythe on their shoulders.

“Hurrah!” they cheered at the tops of their lungs, “Hurrah for Gilbert Blythe, Gold Medalist!”

For a full ten minutes Anne felt a sickening thud of defeat. Not only had she had failed, but Gilbert had won one of the top scholarships! And then the shouts that followed his announcement seemed surreal! One person in the crowd called over directly to her: “Three cheers for Anne Shirley,

winner of the Avery!” The group simply engulfed Anne. She found herself at the centre of a raucous cheering ensemble that had descended on her. They pushed and shoved her affectionately and shook her hand with all their might. She was tossed and hugged in every which way. Through it all, her one thought was of Matthew and Marilla, and how proud this news would make them. Strangely enough, she thought of poor Emily Clay just as Gilbert himself extended a congratulatory hand and hugged her. Then Anne was whisked away by the crowd, just as she caught a glimpse of Gilbert smiling staring at her with enormous pride.

The graduation ceremonies were held in the big convocation hall at Queen’s. Speeches were made, essays read, songs sung, and diplomas, prizes, and medals awarded. Matthew and Marilla sat proudly during the long, ceremony with eyes and ears for only one student on the platform. She was a tall stunning red head, dressed in palest green, with faintly flushed cheeks and starry eyes. It was that same girl, their girl, who read the best essay and was pointed out and whispered about as the remarkable Avery winner.

“Reckon you’re glad we kept her, Marilla,” whispered Matthew, when Anne had finished her speech. “It’s not the first time I’ve been glad,” smiled Marilla. “You do like to rub things in, Matthew Cuthbert.”

Anne traveled back to Avonlea that evening with Matthew and Marilla. The apple blossoms were out in the White Way of Delight and the world seemed so fresh and alive. When Anne found herself back in her own white room, where Marilla had set a flowering house rose on the window sill, Anne looked about her and drew a long breath of happiness. She was back at Green Gables at last, with three golden months of vacation stretching before her.

The very next afternoon, Anne and Diana strolled along the cedar stump path where the Green Gables farmed went down towards the sea. Arm in arm, they chatted and wandered through their favourite old haunts. Anne sighed in sheer contentment. “Oh, Diana, isn’t that breath of mint delicious? I can’t bear the thought of leaving here again.”



“Four years,” whispered Diana sadly. “I’ll probably be old and grey by the time you come back from university.”

“More likely you’ll be married to a dashing handsome young man and much too busy with babies to be interested in your former bosom friend,” giggled Anne. .

“Such as who?” wondered Diana self-deprecatingly, “Moody Spurgeon?”

“I’ll pray that someone wonderful comes to Avonlea and sweeps you off your feet.” Anne tried to cheer her up.

Diana broached a sensitive subject. “Gilbert Blythe is getting the Avonlea School Anne. Did you know?”

Anne was genuinely surprised. She had fully expected that Gilbert would be going off to college, the same as she was.

“His father can’t afford to send him to Redmond,” Diana continued. “He’s going to have to earn his way by teaching.”

Ann felt a slight pang about losing her archrival. “Well I wish him luck,” she replied decidedly. “He’s a talented and determined young man.”

Diana’s expression became peculiar. “You mean....” She lowered her voice and her head. “Do you mean that as far as you’re concerned, he’s fair game?”

Anne was astonished at such a comment coming from Diana.

“Why Diana Barry, if you were interested in Gilbert Blythe why on earth didn’t you ever say so?”

“Because I thought my bosom friend was in love with him all this time,” replied Diana, so solemnly Anne could barely hear her.

Anne quickly realized just how much Diana too had changed in the past year. She leaned over and kissed her dear friend, ever so gently on the cheek.

“Goodnight, sweet Diana,” she said, before turning to take her leave of her and to saunter back up the path toward Green Gables.

Diana smiled back affectionately. “Goodnight Anne.”



The sunset was at its magic point, as Anne ambled along with Matthew, bringing home the cows from the back pasture where the fields sloped down to the sea. The setting sun had turned from gold to crimson and the sweeping fields of hay were tinged with an iridescence that took Anne’s breath away. As twilight descended across the farm she was distracted by this serene spectacle of nature. Matthew was several yards behind her urging Buttercup who always stopped at the gate for an extra helping of grass. Suddenly, Anne caught a choked cry as Matthew struggled to find his breath. Anne turned around and saw that Matthew was lying on the ground. She dashed through the long grass to help him.

“What...is...it, Matthew?” she called barely able to be there fast enough. Matthew lay with an ashen countenance in the tall grass. Anne fell to her knees and tried to lift his poor head onto her lap. His face was composed but looked peculiar and strained.

“Matthew...Please Matthew... speak to me,” whispered Anne helplessly. “Maybe I should run and find the doctor. . . Matthew. . .”

Matthew blinked open his eyes. They looked calm and peaceful, but the familiar sparkling blue had clouded to grey. His voice seemed lost. “Well now...” he muttered, in surprise at finding himself lying on the ground as he

was, "I...got old...and never noticed...I worked hard... all...my life... guess I'd rather drop...in the harness. . ."

Anne put her head on his and caressed his forehead. She whispered to him consolingly, "If I'd been the boy you sent for, I could have spared you in so many ways," she said wistfully.

He smiled wistfully. Anne studied the kindly, wrinkled face looking for an answer. Matthew struggled to find the breath to speak.

"I never wanted a boy...I only wanted you...from that first day," he murmured as his voice got fainter. "Don't ever change...I love my little girl...I'm so proud of my little girl..." His eyes closed. He drifted and then with a final look directly at Anne he was gone.

"Matthew..." implored Anne feebly. "Matthew, don't..."



"I love my little girl ... I'm so proud of my little girl"

Anne could do nothing but stare down at Matthew. Death had brought stillness to Matthew's gentle face. And Anne too was immobilized. Matthew had been her security... her reassurance... her unconditional love. And now he had slipped away from Anne as accidentally as he had come into her life it seemed. Anne held him close to her in the tall grass, weeping inconsolably as the sun disappeared on the horizon and the farm was shrouded in darkness. Two days afterward, they carried Matthew Cuthbert over his homestead threshold, away from the fields he had tilled, the orchards he had loved, and the trees he had planted. They carried him to the graveyard, where the mother he had cared for so tenderly was buried.

All the townsfolk of the seaside village of Avonlea arrived at the little, white clapboard church to pay their respects. For the first time shy, quiet

Matthew Cuthbert had become a person of importance despite himself. The white majesty of death had fallen on him and set him apart as one crowned.

Anne stood, white and pale, at his grave. She was unable to shed another tear; all she could feel now was a dull, throbbing ache inside her. Many townspeople wept openly, others discreetly, but as the service concluded each of them approached Marilla and Anne, pressing their hands, murmuring words of sympathy. Anne felt detached, as if she completely unable to understand what each of them was saying. Marilla was better at processing the condolences and responding, while Anne stood staring straight ahead wondering how Matthew could possibly be dead. The service seemed to go on forever and Anne seemed lost in time; not remembering when it was that Matthew had passed away. If only she could leave and simply find a quiet hiding place where she could be alone, she thought to herself. Then perhaps the tears she wanted desperately to feel for her beloved Matthew might finally return.

Anne was gently pulled back to reality by Marilla who led her away away from the graveside, as the last of their friends disappeared. Then Marilla gripped Anne's arm so tightly Anne was suddenly concerned she was going to faint. Then she saw Gilbert Blythe step forward out of the shadow of the trees by the cemetery gate, holding his hat in his hand. He had trouble expressing himself, but finally found the appropriate way of articulating his feelings. "Miss Cuthbert, Anne. . ." He looked at each of them directly, "I'm very sorry for your loss."

Marilla found the composure to respond, despite her ragged emotional state. She took his hand and replied with dignity, "Thank you, Gilbert Blythe." Anne stared ahead and simply nodded to Gilbert.

She wanted to say so much more. She appreciated his directness and sincerity, but she was far away, lost inside of herself. The words, like her tears, simply would not come out. Holding Marilla's arm, the two women turned and walked slowly away. John Barry was waiting to drive them back to Green Gables.

Anne awoke well past midnight. She suddenly found herself wide-awake with a hundred thoughts rushing through her troubled mind. Surrounded by darkness, Anne relived the traumatic events of the last few days. The memories swept over her like a wave of sorrows. The worst of them all was seeing Matthew's gentle face smiling up at her as he drifted away. She kept

hearing his last words, “My girl. . . I love my little girl.” At that moment uncontrollable emotion poured from Anne and she wept long, primal sobs into the depths of her pillow. Marilla awoke too. She heard Anne’s anguish and she got out bed. She slipped from her room into the dark hallway and gently pushed open the door of Anne’s room in the hope of being able to comfort her.



She approached Anne’s bed and Anne sat up. “Hold me Marilla and just let me cry.”

“There now,” she murmured, enfolding Anne in her arms, “The tears won’t bring him back.”

Anne’s voice was choked with sobs. “I know. The tears don’t hurt like that ache did. Keep your arms around me a little while longer.”

Marilla touched Anne’s tender face and pushed the tear-stained hair from her eyes. “I don’t know what I’d do if you weren’t here...if you’d never come,” she whispered so lovingly. “I know I’ve been strict with you; but you mustn’t think I don’t love you as much as Matthew did. It’s never been easy for me to say things out of my heart, but I love you as dear as if you were my own flesh and blood.”. Anne held Marilla who rocked her like an infant. “There, there. . .” Marilla too was unable to restrain the depths of her emotion. “It isn’t right to cry so, God knows best.... But he was such a good, kind brother to me.”

“Oh, Marilla,” Anne looked through her tears at Marilla’s despondent face. “Whatever will we do without him?”

Marilla shook her head, unable to respond. Anne kissed the old woman’s wrinkled face before she pushed her cheek against it. “We have each other now,” she assured her quietly.

The loss of dear Matthew was felt for weeks at Green Gables, until eventually Marilla and Anne's comings and goings slipped into their traditional patterns. Each day's work was completed and obligations fulfilled with the age-old uniformity that had defined the Cuthberts' lives for years.

Anne was completing a long list of things she needed to discuss with Marilla when she happened to notice from her bedroom window that Marilla was chatting in the back garden with John Sadler, a businessman from Carmody. Anne was in a quandary as to what discussion would ever have evolved between the two. Anne was concerned when she saw the look on Marilla's face as Mr. Sadler pulled away in his democrat.

"What did Mr. Sadler want, Marilla?" she asked, hurrying down the veranda. Marilla untied her apron and folded it neatly. She avoided looking at Anne and she was careful to give the impression that their conversation had been but a casual one. "He once offered to buy Green Gables, and he's still interested."



Anne wondered if Marilla had lost her mind. "Buy Green Gables! Marilla!"

Marilla was forced to confront Anne. "I don't know what to do. My eyes are getting worse. Dr. Spencer says that if my headaches persist I might lose my sight altogether. What if I can't run this place?" Marilla started walking away afraid of telling Anne the truth she had been hiding from her for several weeks. "Rachel has kindly offered to let me live with her and Thomas."

Emotion swept Anne away. "But you can't sell Green Gables! "

Marilla's weary face was now lined with apprehension and fear. "I'd go crazy if there was trouble and I was all alone here. I'm sorry that you won't have a home to come to on your vacations." She turned along the fence and

took in the old place terrified at the thought of letting go of any aspect of the home that she had been born in. “I never thought I’d see the day when I’d have to sell it, but we’ll survive, somehow.”

Anne’s stubborn side revealed itself. She was not about to let Marilla do something that would break her heart. So many ideas had passed through Anne’s head as Marilla spoke, but Anne’s practicality took possession of her and she spoke firmly and directly. “You won’t have to live with Rachel Lynde nor stay here alone, Marilla. I would never let you sell this place.” she offered decisively, “I’m not going to Redmond.”

“Not going to Redmond?” Marilla repeated completely confused. “What happened? What do you mean?”

“I’m not going to take that scholarship,” Anne continued on. “I’d already decided, but I hadn’t told you yet. Mr. Barry has promised me to rent our fields next year, and I’m going to take the school over at Carmody. They need a teacher there.”

“Carmody is thirty miles away,” objected Marilla.

Anne barrelled ahead with her ideas and plans. “I can drive back and forth until the weather gets bad. Then I’ll board and come home on weekends.”



"You never can tell about people from their outsides, now can you?"

Marilla face became flushed. She was cross now at Anne “I won’t let you sacrifice your education for me. I won’t allow it, Anne Shirley.”

Anne took her hand and spoke right back at her. “Marilla Cuthbert, I am going to do it. I am sixteen years old and just as stubborn as you are. So there.”

Marilla faced crumbled immediately. Her heart was in her throat now and the anger dissipated into a heartfelt smile because she knew the extent of Anne's sacrifice. She burst out laughing and crying at the same time, "I know I ought to stick to it and make you go to college. But I know I can't, so I won't try. I'll make it up to you, though," she added, as she embraced Anne and held her tightly. Anne kissed her and confided, "There isn't anything in the world I'd rather do."

Marilla took Anne's hand and they walked silently out through the orchard to enjoy the last of the clear afternoon. Marilla gazed at the slender and attractive young woman Anne had become and she was proud to walk with her, side by side. Out of nowhere she broke her silence and stopped Anne. "Gilbert Blythe will be teaching, too, won't he?" she asked.

Anne nodded. "Yes," she whispered, "I understand the trustees have promised the Avonlea School to him."

Marilla walked ahead of Anne. "What a nice looking young fellow he is," she ruminated. "He looks a lot like his father did at that age. We used to be real good friends, he and I." She looked back at Anne. "People used to call him my beau."

Anne was taken aback at such a personal confession. "What happened? Why didn't you...?" she asked with intense curiosity.

"We quarrelled and I wouldn't forgive him when he asked me to. I wanted to, after a while. . . but I was stubborn and I thought I needed to punish him first." Marilla shook her head gravely, then turned and looked into Anne's eyes completely bewildered "He never came back. I always felt rather sorry. I've always kind of wished I'd forgiven him... when I had the chance."

"So you have had a bit of romance in your life, too," said Anne tenderly.

Marilla tried to brighten herself. "I suppose you might call it that. You wouldn't think so to look at me, would you? But you never can tell about people from their outsides, now can you?"

Word spread like wildfire in Avonlea that Anne Shirley had settled on teaching in Avonlea to remain with Marilla. Anne's decision like most Anne ideas was met with a great deal of deal of discussion and debate on the why and wherefore of it all. Most people in Avonlea, knowing nothing of Marilla's severe condition with her eyesight, thought Anne was a

complete fool. Fortunately Mrs. Rachel Lynde remained Anne's staunchest ally. She hurried over one evening to report on the local gossip to Anne and Marilla to find both of them sitting on the front veranda simply enjoying the lush scent of summer dusk. They had both, of late, begun to delight in such quiet time—just before twilight when the delightful smell of mint from Marilla's herb garden filled the air.

"Despite what people say I for one am real glad to hear you've given up that notion of going to college, Anne," she proclaimed depositing her substantial person into a cozy wicker rocker. "I don't believe in girls going to college with the men and cramming their heads full of Latin and Greek and all that nonsense."

"Oh come now Rachel, I'm going to be taking my courses by correspondence, just the same," said Anne enjoying goading Mrs. Rachel, who raised her hands in holy horror. "With all the work you'll have to do, teaching over at Carmody, and looking after Green Gables. . . Marilla!" she spoke firmly and sharply, "talk some sense into that girl for pity's sake."

"Oh mind your own business for once, Rachel, and leave her alone," replied Marilla taking charge. "You know Anne thrives on studying."

Anne left them to the pleasure of bickering amongst themselves while she decided to wander out in the field alone to watch the sun set. She needed that privacy, for she was content and happy with her decision and didn't care to discuss it any further, with anyone. Eventually she began to wander along the cedar stump path that she so often enjoyed with Diana. This led to her curiosity getting the better of her and she eagerly continued on down the long hill that sloped over to the Barry farm and her beloved Lake of Shining Waters.

In the evening glow, the whole homestead had taken on a dreamlike quality at that hour. She watched, transfixed and contemplated how incredibly things had changed since she had come home from Queen's. She had brought home many new plans and dreams and ambitions. None of that mattered now at all and she couldn't have been happier despite such remarkable changes!

She felt confident to be able to look duty frankly in the face and to find it a friend. A more peaceful feeling settled in her heart that would help lighten the burden of losing Matthew. The fragrant breeze blew against her face

and she felt no regret at leaving Redmond College and scholarships behind her.



While lost in thought, she caught sight of a figure approaching on horseback from far across the fields. She was stunned to see that it was Gilbert Blythe. He galloped smartly up to her and dismounted.

“Miss Cuthbert said I could probably find you here,” he said with great charm. He held out his hand and offered her an envelope.

Baffled, Anne accepted the offering and scanned the contents of the letter inside. She was unable to grasp its full meaning without rereading it several times. The letter was a formal response to a suggestion put forward by Mr. Gilbert Blythe that trustees of the Avonlea School should agree to engage Miss Anne Shirley in his stead. The letter went on to say that; ‘Mr. Blythe had reluctantly decided to turn down their recent offer to engage his services in the position of teacher of the local public school.

“I hope you don’t mind but I took the liberty of speaking to the board of trustees about an exchange,” Gilbert said bashfully. “I’ll be getting Carmody and you can stay at Green Gables.”

Anne was at a complete loss for words. “I . . . I don’t know what to say,” she faltered.

His smile was radiant. “Don’t say anything.”

“But you’ll have to pay for your board”, Anne protested. “You’ll never save enough for college! I can’t let you do that. . .”

“I’ll save enough,” responded Gilbert resolutely. “Besides, I’ll keep up with my studies by correspondence.”

“Why, that’s what I’m doing too!” laughed Anne in amazement. She offered Gilbert her hand out of sincere gratitude. “Gilbert,” she said formally, her

face beginning to become flushed, “Thank you for giving up the school for me. It was very good of you. . . and I want you to know how much I appreciate it.”

Gilbert took her hand and shook it in a friendly manner. “I figure you can give me some coaching in my studies then; and we’ll call it a fair exchange.”

Anne chuckled. She tried to withdraw her hand but Gilbert persisted in shaking it and would not let go.



"Thank you for giving up the school for me. I want you to know how much I appreciate it"

“Aren’t you afraid I might break another slate over your head?” she asked shyly. Finally they stopped shaking hands. Gilbert suddenly reached over and pushed aside an auburn curl, which was blowing across Anne’s eyes. “I’m more worried I might break one over yours,” he said teasingly. Then he added “Carrots...” with great affection. Anne smiled at the joke. Gilbert took the opportunity to put his arm around her shoulder. “C’mon ” he offered, “I’ll walk you home.” The two great friends sauntered across the fields as the sun created magical patterns of shadow and light at the close of a long summer’s day.



Marilla looked up with interest as Anne entered the kitchen. “Who was that came up the lane with you, Anne?” “Gilbert Blythe,” answered Anne, annoyed to find herself all red-faced at Marilla’s simple question.

“I didn’t think you and Gilbert Blythe were such good friends that you’d stand for half an hour at the gate talking to him,” said Marilla slyly.

“We haven’t been...friends. We’ve been good enemies. But we’ve definitely decided to be good friends in future. Were we really there half an hour Marilla?”

Marilla’s eyes sparkled in a way that Anne hadn’t seen in several months. “I’ve never known that clock to lie. Not since Matthew brought it home from Carmody.”

“It only seemed a couple of minutes. But I suppose, we’ve years of lost conversations to catch up on.” Marilla was satisfied at Anne’s answer and she nodded.

Anne slipped upstairs to the quiet of her little room. That evening, she sat contentedly at her window for a long time—until the stars began to twinkle in the deep indigo sky.

It was true that her horizons had closed in around her since Matthew’s death and since making her decision to stay at Green Gables. But though the path ahead might appear to be narrower, Anne was certain that flowers of quiet happiness were going to bloom along it in droves.

In an unexpected way her ideal world of dreams, seemed more real than ever.



““God’s in His heaven,”” whispered Anne to herself, ““all’s right with the world.””

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